Liverpool Ladies in Europe + Mario Balotelli on Instagram + Didi on coming to the Premier League + Poetry in motion

LIVERPOOL FC

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official liverpool fc monthly magazine

JORDAN HENDERSON

STEVIE
"The best skipper in football"

PRESSURE
"I love all of that"

THE FUTURE
"We'll win trophies"

THE BOSS
"I trust him"



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JIMMY CASE
LFC's Bruce Lee



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WIN!
Awesome official history book





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Issue 27 November 2014







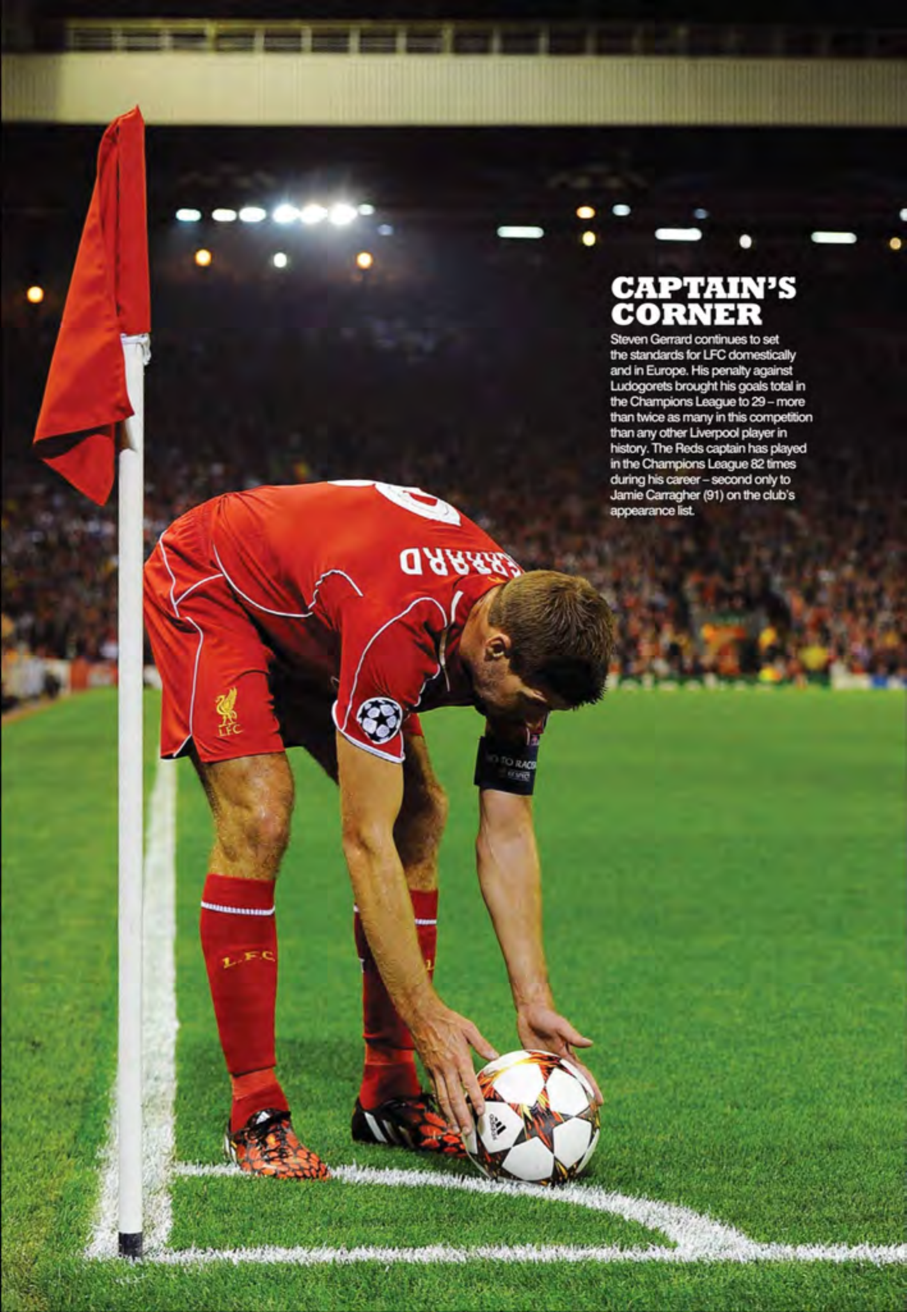
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www.programmemaster.com Tel 020 7121 5000 Fax 020 7121 5001
Email LFCMag@programmemaster.com. To subscribe call 08700 20 20 20 or visit www.programmemaster.com **Printed by** William Gibbons





BEING RAHEEM

Two Liverpool players provided the assists for Danny Welbeck's England double against Switzerland in the recent Euro 2016 qualifier: Raheem Sterling and Rickie Lambert. About Sterling, who now has nine caps, team-mate Wayne Rooney was full of praise: "He's a fantastic player. He's quite unusual: he can play right across the front line, out wide. Although he's a small lad, he's really strong as well. He'll be a massive player for England for the next 10 years, and for Liverpool."



CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Steven Gerrard continues to set the standards for LFC domestically and in Europe. His penalty against Ludogorets brought his goals total in the Champions League to 29 – more than twice as many in this competition than any other Liverpool player in history. The Reds captain has played in the Champions League 82 times during his career – second only to Jamie Carragher (91) on the club's appearance list.

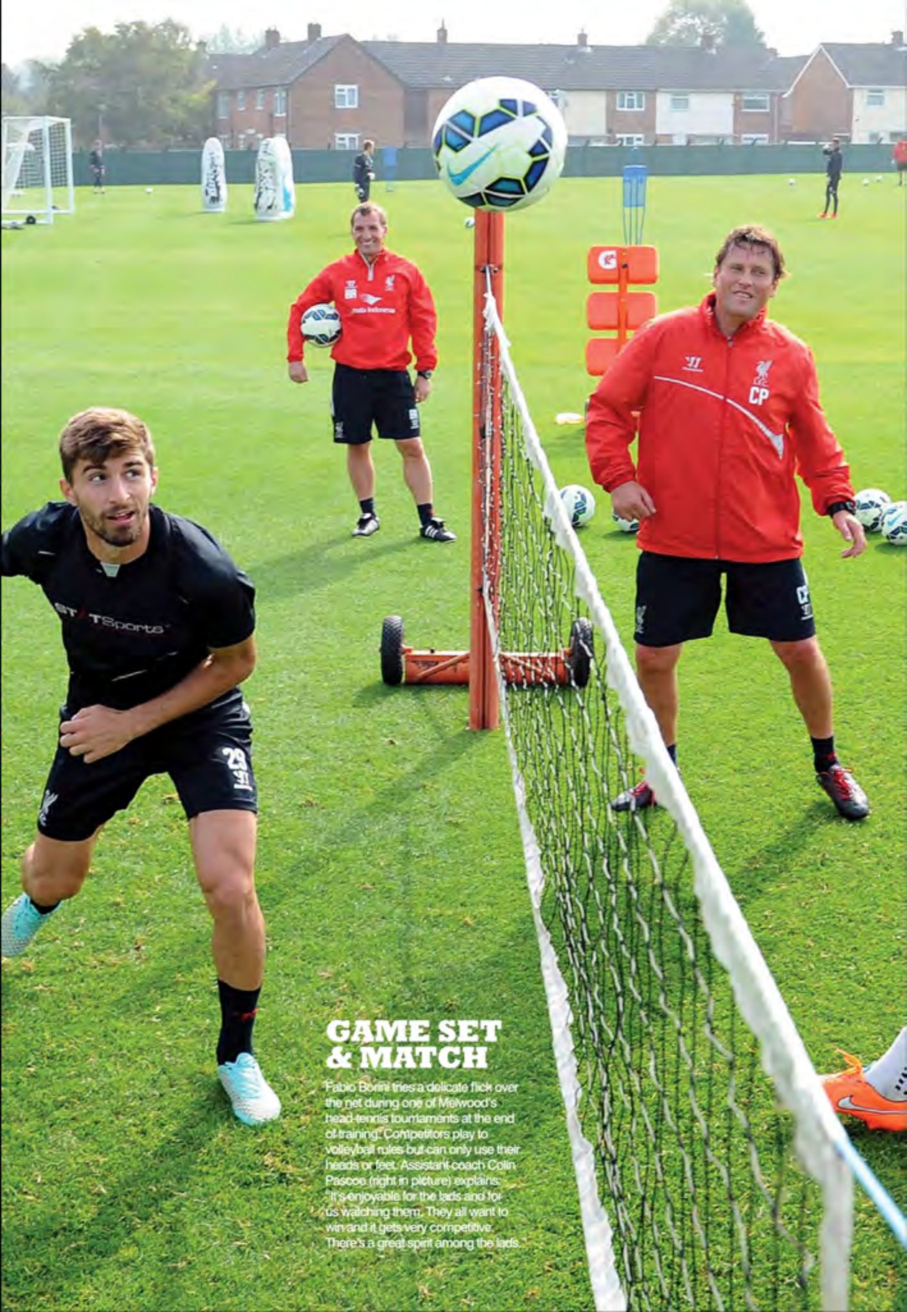


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SPOT ON ...FINALLY!

It took 120 minutes plus 30 penalties – 27 scored and three missed – to separate a young Reds side and a valiant Middlesbrough team in last month's dramatic Capital One Cup third-round tie at Anfield. Pictured here celebrating after Boro's Albert Adomah failed to convert in a heartstopping shootout finale, are Jose Enrique, Javi Manquillo, Raheem Sterling, Mamadou Sakho, Kolo Toure, Adam Lallana, Mario Balotelli and Lucas. Phew…



GAME SET & MATCH

Fabio Borini tries a delicate flick over the net during one of Melwood's head-tennis tournaments at the end of training. Competitors play to volleyball rules but can only use their heads or feet. Assistant-coach Colin Pascoe (right in picture) explains: "It's enjoyable for the lads and for us watching them. They all want to win and it gets very competitive. There's a great spirit among the lads."


L.F.C.
LIVERPOOL



Scoring v Chelsea in the Champions League semi-final second leg of 2007

Daniel's letter to the fans

"Liverpool has been such a big part of my life and my family's lives for so long that leaving is extremely difficult. My family and I have always felt your backing, it is something unique to this football club, this city and our supporters – it's been a privilege to have represented this club and I'm forever thankful for everything I have learnt during my time here. When I joined this great club, I came here as a 21-year-old boy with a lot to learn. Liverpool has helped me grow up and shape me into the man I am today. I'm proud of who I've become and I wouldn't be the person I am today without my time at Liverpool."

GREAT DANE

A fond farewell to one of Liverpool FC's finest defenders

Long-serving defender Daniel Agger left Liverpool FC two days before the close of the summer transfer window having made 232 appearances during eight-and-a-half seasons at the club.

Upon Daniel's arrival at Anfield in January 2006 from Brondby, the manager that signed him recognised his potential to be a long-term signing. "He could be a Liverpool centre-back for the next 10 years," Rafael Benitez speculated. Within 18 months Agger had established himself in the starting XI, although persistent injury problems meant it took him more than four years to clock up 100 games in a red shirt.

At home in the city, he invested in a number of businesses and continually spoke of his contentment at the club. "I don't want to play for any other team," he told the magazine in 2011. Later that year he launched his own foundation in Denmark to help children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In 2012/13 Daniel played in more Premier League matches (35) than in any of his previous six full seasons as an LFC player and added three more goals to take his total into double figures. Such was his passion for the club he had YNWA tattooed onto his knuckles. He rejoined Brondby in Denmark, explaining that despite more lucrative offers, protecting his legacy at Liverpool meant more to him.



Rocket v West Ham in August 2006

Belter v Blackburn, April 2009

Shirt hurled to the fans after the 2012 FA Cup semi-final

Heading home v Man United in January 2012

WHEN DAN WAS THE MAN

In his first full season nets in a 2-1 win over West Ham in August 2006. His 35-yard screamer in front of the Kop wins the BBC's goal of the month award and is voted Liverpool FC's goal of the season.

Later in 2006/07 he turns in a goalscoring, man-of-the-match display in the UEFA Champions League semi-final second leg against Chelsea, which ultimately sees the Reds triumph on penalties to reach Athens.

Heads home against Manchester United in a pulsating FA Cup tie at Anfield in January 2012.

Starts the 2012 Carling Cup final against Cardiff City and wins his first major honour as the Reds triumph on penalties to claim the trophy for the eighth time.

In November 2012 wins the Danish player of the year award for the second time – he'd previously earned the same accolade in 2007.

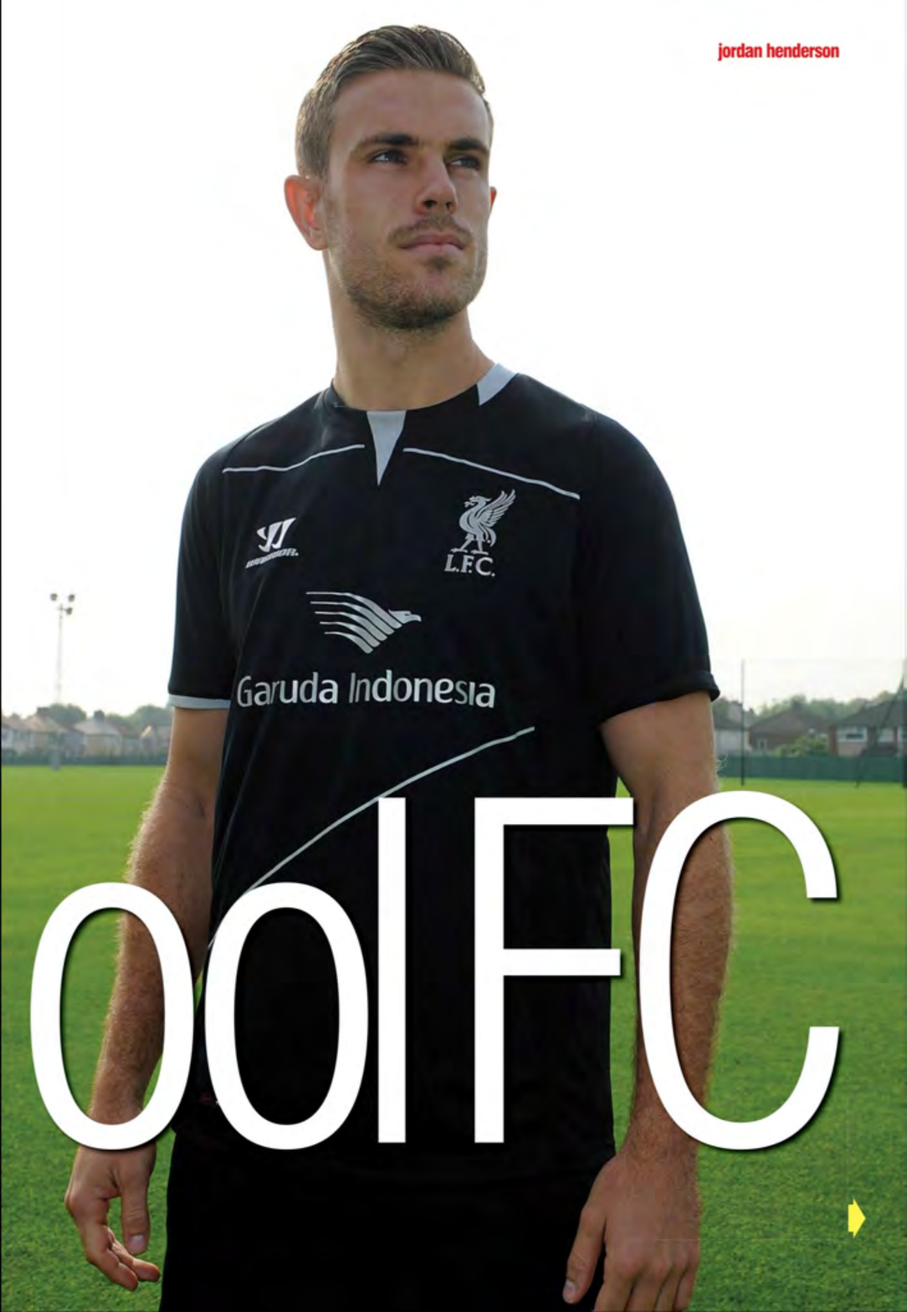
Makes his 200th appearance for the club in the UEFA Europa League game against Zenit St Petersburg in February 2013.

On the eve of the 2013/14 season, named vice-captain of the first team by Liverpool boss Brendan Rodgers.

In what proves to be his final league game at Anfield, signs off by scoring in front of the Spion Kop during the 2-1 win over Newcastle United.

Jordan Henderson arrived at Anfield in June 2011 as a cub, eight days before his 21st birthday. Three years later he pulls on the red jersey as vice-captain. He talks to Simon Hughes about learning from the boss and Stevie, growing up in public and

the future of Liverp


L.F.C.
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Saluting a Sterling goal with team-mates

"My attitude remains the same: to try to help the team win football matches"

Jordan, you are now Liverpool's vice-captain - how does it feel?

It's a great honour to be given an important role at a club the size of this, with all its history. It's also encouraging that the manager has given me the extra responsibility. All I can do is keep doing what I've been doing and look to support Stevie [Gerrard] in any way I can as well as the team, of course. For me, nothing changes. My attitude towards training and games will remain the same. I just want to try my best and help the team to win football matches. That's the most important thing.

How did Brendan Rodgers break the news to you?

We had a meeting in his office here at Melwood before the Aston Villa game. I wanted to focus on Villa and only told my family and close friends afterwards but before it came out in the press. They were over the moon. But like I say, it won't change how I am. Just because I'm vice-captain now doesn't mean I'm going to be captain in the future. I'm not taking anything for granted.

The manager explained to me that he'd given the vice-captaincy a lot of consideration, but he didn't put any pressure on me. He wants me to crack on and carry on playing the way I have been for Liverpool and hopefully grow and improve again over time.

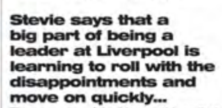
It gives me a lot of pride. I've done it for England Under-21s and I've liked it. I've tried to lead by example. That's what I'll try to do here.



A trust thing: with the gaffer

You seem to share a close relationship with the manager...

It works both ways. Giving me the vice-captaincy is a sign he trusts me. I trust him. I've got a lot to thank him for, really, in the way he's improved me as a player and also as a person off the field. The manager's got a brilliant relationship with all the players here. If you asked anyone else, they would probably give you the same response as I have. They'd speak highly of him.



Stevie says that a big part of being a leader at Liverpool is learning to roll with the disappointments and move on quickly...

That was one of the biggest things that I needed to come to terms with, when I first came here. I was 20, 21 when I joined and when you're very young you can dwell on things quite a lot. It's one area where I've improved a lot.

At the end of the day you can't changed what's happened. You can only influence what happens in the future. As long as you learn from mistakes, you'll be fine. When we have a bad result or I have a bad performance, it isn't nice. It hurts, it ruins your evening. But the next day you've got to move on, taking the negatives and the positives.



What other lessons have you learnt from the captain since arriving at Liverpool?

Stevie's probably not only the best captain for Liverpool and before with



Battling with Manchester City's Stevan Jovetic

England but in the game itself. Being around him has benefited me a lot. It's been huge. Every day I watch him. It's his desire to improve. He's been the best and most influential player here for such a long time but he still wants to get better. He doesn't take anything for granted. He takes training really seriously and sets the tone for how things should be. Everyone else follows.

He does a lot of things that people on the outside don't always see. On the pitch he's a great leader. You can see the goals, the passes and the tackles he makes; the way he inspires the team. But off the pitch he conducts himself brilliantly too. He's a genuinely nice person and everybody in the squad knows they can go to him. The most important thing is, he puts the team in front of everybody else including himself. The most important thing is the team.

You're in your fourth season as a Liverpool player. What have you learnt since signing from Sunderland?

It has been tough at times, but that's the way it is in football. You have highs then you have lows. It can be like that week to week. You've got to deal with negatives and positives in the same way. Never get too high or too low during the course of a season, then use a bit of the summer to take stock. You've got to stay in a positive mind-set and learn from everything. I feel as though I've learnt a lot and matured a lot. Hopefully I can continue to improve by listening to the people around me and putting my own stamp on things. It's important to be your own person.

How strong mentally do you have to be to succeed at Liverpool?

Liverpool is a huge club as everyone knows. Every single game, the stadiums are sold out. I've been on four summer tours to Asia, Australia and United States. The interest is massive. It's overwhelming really. The club has a worldwide reach which few clubs in the world have. You can walk down the street in a city anywhere in the world and there will be someone wearing a Liverpool shirt. All of that means there's a big responsibility. Everyone is watching you. Nearly all of the Premier League matches are on TV so you aren't just playing for the people inside the stadium but the people in their homes.

"You should never get too high or too low – just try to stay positive"

Everyone has an opinion. Maybe at other clubs the focus isn't there as much. If you have a bad game once in a while, it gets lost and it's forgotten quickly. At Liverpool the pressure is on every moment of every single game. You can't hide. But I love all of that. You have to deal with the pressure in your own way. It's what you work hard for, to be in the pressure environments like this.

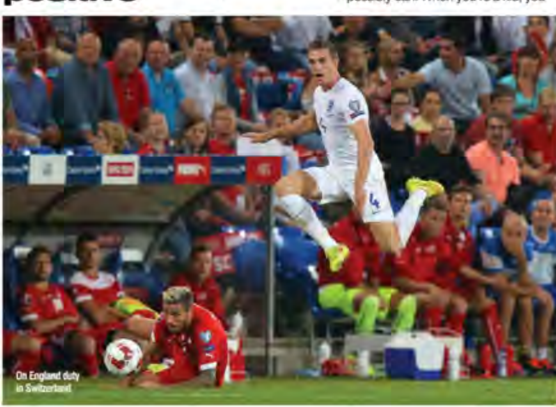
Did you ever doubt that you'd reach this stage at Liverpool, where you're vice-captain and an important player?

I've never thought too far ahead to be honest – you can't afford to. Life is too short. You focus on the little steps: what you need to do at the time. I wasn't always in the Liverpool team so my first aim was to get a place. Once I'd achieved that, my aim was to stay there and hopefully grow, being a part of a successful side. It's the same now. I only think about the next game.

I know it's a cliche, but that's all you can do. Every game is important, every training session. I try to give everything in training and take that into games. I use a lot of video analysis after games to try and learn where I can improve. Then I start again the following day.

The Liverpool crowd loves a player who gives everything – is that something you've tapped into?

I've always been a player who's tried to close the opposition down. From a young age I've worked as hard as I possibly can. When you're a kid, you



On England duty in Switzerland



"You learn to channel last year's hurt and use it to drive you next time"

charge about all over the place, trying to influence things. When you move into the professional game, you can't always do that because there are tactics to consider.

The way this Liverpool team presses is very tactical. The manager has helped me understand where and when I should press. If you do it at the wrong times it can affect the team. So you've got to be clever about it.

Last season, 2013/14, was a big one for you, wasn't it?
It was a big season for everyone. We jumped five places in the league and nearly ended up winning it. Nobody on the outside predicted we'd do as well as that, nobody. There were lots of great games where everybody played well; some brilliant team performances. Quite soon into the season it definitely felt different to the previous seasons.

I thought we'd be right up there at the end, fighting for the title. I believed we could win the Premier League throughout the season. So there was disappointment at the end. It was hard to take initially. When you get so close, it's bound to be that way. That's life; you've got to get on with things. We pushed Manchester City all the way.

But we can't dwell on that now. The hurt will always stay with you, when you walk off the pitch on the last day of the season, knowing it has been so close but ultimately we haven't been quite good enough. You learn to channel that hurt and drive you on again. You have to use that to motivate yourself and believe that one day, we'll win the Premier League.

The young players in the squad will be better for the experience...
Of course they will. There's a lot of young players here who've been together for a while now. We're quite close as a squad. There are [young] lads like Raheem, Flano, then myself and Studge who are a little bit older. We all feel the responsibility of getting results to take the club forward by winning trophies. That's what excites me most. We've got a young team. If we continue to work in the right way, we can win trophies. The future is very bright.



Using his head v Ludogorets

Despite being 24 - which is still quite young - do you feel like you are one of the senior players?

I still feel young. If you ask the lads, they'll probably say that off the field I am young. But at the same time I'm a father now and that helps make you more mature as a person. When I became a father it was an amazing feeling. It helps when I go home and see my little girl. It puts a smile on my face. No matter how bad things might be elsewhere – no matter what has happened in a game – she'll make me feel better. It gives you more perspective and more responsibility as a person. I think that reflects on the pitch too. It helps give you balance and focus.

You've had your first experience of Champions League football at Anfield. What was it like?

It was brilliant. The atmosphere is always good at Anfield, but there is something different about it during night games. I think it's both the home and away fans. They both make a contribution. Our supporters feed off that and it becomes a cauldron. Being in the Champions League is very exciting. We go into any game believing we can win.

I can't believe it's already been 10 seasons since the club last won the competition. It was one of the best games I've seen. Stevie was the captain and leader then and he's still the captain and leader. What an unbelievable performance that was by him. To go in 3-0 down at half-time to opponents like AC Milan and end up as a winner; as a player now I can appreciate just how hard that is to achieve. I was 14 or 15 at the time Istanbul happened and now I'm here as a team-mate of Stevie's – at the age he was then, 24. It's pretty mad when you think about it. It makes you realise anything can happen.

"I watched Istanbul and now I'm the same age as Stevie then, 24"





Henderson's 2013/14 stats

Jordan went from starting just under half of Liverpool's league games in 2012/13 to being named in the starting XI for all the 35 games that he was available.

While his passing accuracy stood at an impressive 87 per cent, the devil is in the detail in regards to where it took place. In the attacking third of the field his success rate increased by nine per cent. He also created 60 chances for team-mates with seven assists – a chance created every 51 minutes.

Accurate defensive zone passes: 673
Total defensive zone passes: 729
Defensive-zone pass completion: 92%
Total attacking-zone passes: 1244
Accurate attacking-zone passes: 1006
Attacking-zone pass-completion: 81%
Accurate final-third passes: 578
Total final-third passes: 710
Final-third pass completion: 81%



A to Z of Anfield

Presenting the first part of an encyclopaedic new series about the hallowed home of Liverpool FC

PART 1



is for **ANFIELD ROAD** – 150 years ago a quiet, leafy address in the boom-port of Liverpool, now home to one of the most famous venues in the world of sport. Back then the residents were well-to-do merchants and bankers who built fancy villas, lodges and cottages with sweeping views of the Mersey and its shipping – look closely and you'll still find one or two of their original homes in the shadow of the current stadium.

The first Anfield Road Stand opened in 1903, around two decades after football first began to be played here. In 1965, the year that Liverpool Football Club won the FA Cup for the first time ever in its history, it was rebuilt and given a roof. And in 1982 the standing terraces were stripped out and multi-coloured seats were installed. The upper tier was added as recently as 1998. Plans have now been proposed to increase the stand's capacity by around 4,800 seats as part of a wider expansion of the stadium taking the overall attendance to just under 60,000.



And for **ATTENDANCES** – the highest of all time at Anfield is 61,905 for Liverpool's FA Cup fifth-round tie against Wolverhampton Wanderers on Saturday 2 February 1952. The highest in the league is 58,757 for a 2-2 draw with Chelsea on Tuesday 27 December 1949; and in Europe 55,104 for the UEFA Cup semi-final second leg with Johan Cruyff's Barcelona on Wednesday 14 April 1976, drawn 1-1 with the Reds going through to the final on away goals.



And for **ATMOSPHERE** – times as well as fashions may change in football, but at Anfield the pride and passion remains the same. Games against big rivals still generate an intensity unmatched elsewhere, and the litany of deafening occasions in European competition is legend: Inter Milan in 1965, St Etienne in 1977, while those lucky enough to be present at the second leg of the 2005 Champions League semi-final with Chelsea will vouch for an Anfield atmosphere as good if not better than any which had preceded it down the years.

"The fans are our 12th man and often a massive advantage for us"

Not that the club or players – nor the fans themselves – should ever take it for granted. Just recently skipper Steven Gerrard spelled out the importance of Anfield's aura in his matchday programme notes: "Had it not been for the backing we received in games both home and on the road en route to Istanbul and then Athens, I don't think we'd have got anywhere near the Champions League final on each occasion. The fans are our 12th man and when they are charged up, opponents can't deal with it. I've seen some excellent teams freeze and players make decisions they wouldn't normally because of the noise. It's such a massive advantage and I can't emphasise enough how much I appreciate it as captain."



is for **BOOT ROOM** – recalled today by the eponymously-named sports cafe at the stadium, originally sited under the Main Stand where the current press room is, and forever associated with an Anfield dynasty founded by Bill Shankly where Liverpool FC's finest hours were plotted and planned.

As it goes, Shanks, whose arrival was the Big Bang of LFC's universe, was anything but a Boot Room man. "Occasionally he'd show his face," recalls Roy Evans, one of his disciples and a future Reds boss himself. "But it was Bob [Paisley] and Joe [Fagan] and Ronnie [Moran] – they started that side of it, it was their domain.

"We were there every day. Going back 30-odd years we used to come in on Sundays regularly, from ten to 12. It was nothing fancy, just a little room that we had to hang our coats and chat about football over a cup of tea or sometimes a beer."

It was also, of course, strictly private, although opposition managers were always welcome for a post-match drink. Even the players were prohibited. Any caught loitering outside suffered the wrath of Moran.

And all opium for the Kop's masses. While the fans could only wonder what secrets this most scared of sites might contain, the select few who gained access described a shabby room 12ft by 12ft reeking of dubbin and liniment; its floor space occupied by tatty kit hampers which doubled up as seats; its walls plastered with faded photographs and pin-up calendars; it cupboards stacked with notepads, *Rothmans Football Yearbooks* and drinks. Like its patrons it was deliberately unremarkable. Ill-fitting tracksuits, muddy boots, mundane meeting places. Its demolition in 1993 was pure legend fodder.

"Bob, Joe and Ronnie started it – the room was always their little domain"





is for **CENTENARY STAND** – which replaced the old single-tiered Kemlyn Stand in 1992 to commemorate Liverpool Football Club's 100th birthday. As well as its seating there are executive boxes, various lounges, a TV studio and police operations centre.

And for **CAPACITY** – today the Centenary's is 11,411 (plus 344 in executive boxes); then 12,390 for the Kop, 9,116 for the Anfield Road Stand, 9,575 for the Main Stand, and 2,454 for the Paddock.





And for **CHANGES** – currently around the football ground as part of the area's regeneration plan. Construction work adjacent to the stadium has altered pedestrian access for supporters on matchdays this season, while work begins on redeveloping the Main Stand.

And for **CURLETT CUP** – the DIY trophy famously paraded around Anfield when the team clinched the League title with a 5-0 victory over Arsenal on Saturday 18 April 1964 (the real silverware was unavailable for presentation).

The day was reported thus by the *Liverpool Echo* correspondent of the time: 'The eleven returned to the field almost immediately to a rapturous reception from the terraces, and a standing ovation from everyone in the stands. The roar when they ran in front of the Kop increased by 50 per cent. I don't think I have ever seen such an Anfield scene. It almost baffled description by its warmth and intensity'.

Made by a family of local fans, the Curletts, from one of their mum's old vases with the top of a bannister used for a lid, the trophy was back at Anfield for the team's 50th reunion party in November 2013.

"The team returned to the field to a rapturous reception from fans"

And for **CONCERT** – Sir Paul McCartney lit up the stadium at Anfield with a special gig to celebrate the city of Liverpool's status as European Capital of Culture in 2008. Almost 40,000 spectators packed into the famous venue to see the former Beatle supported by The Zutons and Kaiser Chiefs.




"There is a lot still to do but we are proud to unveil our plans"



is for **DEVELOPMENT** – at the end of last season Liverpool FC unveiled its stadium expansion plans with detailed proposals for the Main Stand and outline proposals for the Anfield Road Stand.

Public consultation and exhibitions on the proposals took place with the club asking for residents, fans and local businesses to give their views as part of the planning application. The design proposals for the redevelopment of the Main Stand could add an additional 8,500 seats taking its capacity to nearly 21,000 and overall Anfield capacity to around 54,000. Incorporating the club crest into the proposed Main Stand's exterior elevation, the scheme will also include a two-storey podium and a carefully designed cloister which will become the new home for the Hillsborough Memorial. The Main Stand will open onto a wide public concourse which will link the stadium into the wider Anfield area, while the outline proposals for the Anfield Road Stand provide for an increase in its capacity of around 4,800 seats.

Ian Ayre, the football club's managing director, says: "We started this journey just over 18 months ago and a lot of work has already been done. There is still an incredible amount to do, but good progress has been made so far and we are proud to be able to unveil our plans."

And for **DERBIES** – this September's showdown with Everton was the 96th Liverpool-Everton match in the league at Anfield. We've gone to press with this issue of the magazine before the game was played, so we'd best leave it at that…





is for **EURO NIGHTS** – specifically UEFA Champions League nights, back at Anfield after a five-year absence. Matchday one's home fixture with PFC Ludogorets Razgrad took the total aggregate crowd to have witnessed UCL encounters at Anfield beyond the two million-mark. To date 2,013,368 fans have now seen CL games at L4.

Ahead of the Ludogorets game, Reds boss Brendan Rodgers spoke of his own excitement at the prospect: "I have had the privilege to experience European nights as manager of this club already, in the Europa League in my first season here. I have also been fortunate to experience what Anfield is like on a Champions League evening, albeit from the position of opposition coaching staff member.

"There aren't words to do justice to the atmosphere created inside Anfield, under the lights, on these evenings. It has to be experienced to truly appreciate the power of the Anfield crowd and its influence on the game itself. [The fans] are a vital part of our team for this new adventure and your backing will be crucial in helping us face the challenges and tests ahead."

Centre-back Mamadou Sakho adds: "The atmosphere is very special when there is a Champions League match at Anfield. Many players say that this is the football stadium with the best crowd in the world."

And for **EVERY OTHER SATURDAY** – from the Kop's vast repertoire, with this opening verse: 'Every other Saturday's me half-day-off / And it's off to the match I go / You'll see me walking down the Anfield Road / Me and me old pal Joe / We love to see the lasses with their red scarves on / We love to hear the Kopites roar / But I don't have to tell you that best of all / We love to see the Liverpool scoooooore!'

"Words can't do justice to Anfield under the floodlights"



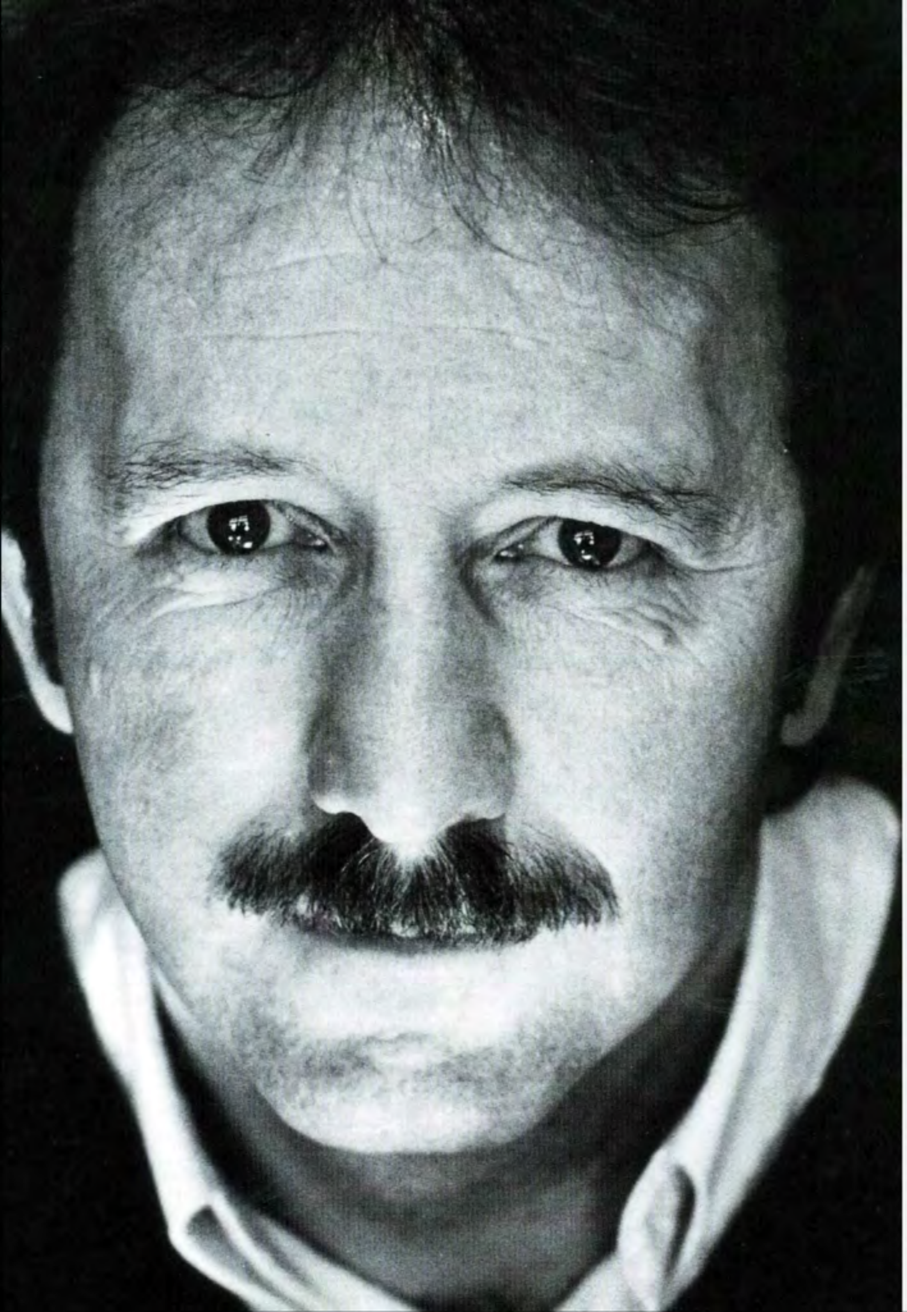
is for **FLAGS** – none more majestic than the 100ft x 65ft labour of love created by fan Frank Graceffa. The first one he made was for the last game on the standing Kop, against Norwich City in May 1994, and "things just progressed from there," he explains. "The current flag first appeared for the derby of 2000 and we've added to it as we've gone along, with images of trophies and managers. The European Cups are 10ft high and the figures are 16ft. People sometimes ask why there aren't any players on the flag, only managers. I always say that players come and go but managers make the history. If you look closely you'll notice they're all holding each other's trophies to signify continuity through the ages."

And for **FLAGPOLE CORNER** – the landmark meeting-place outside the Spion Kop near the junction of Walton Breck Road and what used to be Kemlyn Road, and home to the top mast of the *SS Great Eastern*, the massive iron sailing ship built by Isambard Kingdom Brunel in the 1850s.



And for **FORTRESS** – last season Liverpool were unbeaten at Anfield from the last week in September till the last week of April. But even that achievement pales a little in comparison to the 85-game unbeaten run at home from January 1978 to January 1981. Terry McDermott, part of the all-conquering team back then, recalls: "You were expected to go out and steamroller everyone, but sometimes it didn't happen that way. You'd get teams coming to Anfield with everyone behind the ball. Sometimes it didn't matter, we'd break them down. Other times we'd have to work harder, perhaps score the winner in the dying seconds. That's the Liverpool way."

The run was brought to an end by bottom-of-the-table Leicester City with a 2-1 victory. Foxes midfielder Ian Wilson, later to play for Everton, remembers "the shock on the faces of the Liverpool players – they couldn't believe they'd lost. We got a standing ovation at the end, typical of Liverpool supporters. People in Leicester still talk about the match to this day."



OHHH JIMMY JIMMY

Cult Anfield hero Jimmy Case was never going to write just a 'normal' autobiography, as he explains to Simon Hughes

Jimmy – why an autobiography now?

Over the years I've been asked loads of times by different journalists to do one. I've never fancied it. But I turned 60 in May and figured it would be a good time to finally get something down. As you get older you understand life a little bit more. It becomes easier to reflect. I realised how much football has changed and thought it was important to tell my story.

There are a lot of player autobiographies around aren't there?

I'd liken my story to John Aldridge's. We were both lads from the south end of the city, who had to go around the houses a bit to get to where we wanted to be. Our fathers used to have a pint together. There are some good autobiographies and some not so good ones. Mine isn't a game-by-game account of my career. It's more about feelings and tales. There's a lot of stuff in there that people don't know about. For instance, it explains why I left Liverpool under a bit of a cloud even though I didn't want to. Then there's the different tale about how Kevin Keegan got a black eye after the European Cup final in Rome. Personally I like to read musical autobiographies. I'm a big fan of Eric Clapton. Football's my life but it's good to escape and read something else.

"It's not a game-by-game kind of book, it's about feelings and tales"

What is unique about yours?

My path into football, I suppose. I went from parks football to winning the European Cup in a few short years. There aren't many players who have done that. I didn't sign for Liverpool until I was 17 and the experiences before, playing for South Liverpool in non-league, set me up for life. They influence the person I am today.

Are there still players in non-league football good enough to make the grade?

All you need is a bit of patience – that counts for the clubs, the players and the scouts. Merseyside remains a hotbed of football, the standard is really high. I was a little rough around the edges and just needed a bit of guidance. There was another lad called Johnny Moore who played with me for the Blue Union [team] in Garston, and in another life, with a bit more luck, I know for a fact he would've been a professional if a break had come his way at the right time. Football is not an exact science and don't let anyone ever tell you that. I'm convinced there are still teenagers out there with the ability, ones who can flourish if given the opportunity.

The biggest problem is dealing with disappointment. Any ex-pro will tell you they have received knockbacks along the way. Even with all the ability in the world, there are times in a player's career when it doesn't go to plan. If you can take the rough with the smooth you're halfway there.

When I was 14 I was told by Tom Saunders [LFC club scout] I wasn't good enough for Liverpool schoolboys. Nearly everyone who got picked for the schoolboys went to a league club: Liverpool, Everton, both Manchester teams, Stockport County or Wrexham. Then at 16 I was told I wasn't good enough for Burnley by Dave Merrington (latterly manager of Southampton) after a trial. At 17 I signed for Liverpool on Tom's recommendation. Then later on in my career Dave was involved at Southampton when I went there and we got on very well. It just shows you how things can change if you hang in there.

"I could hit the ball without backlift, like Bruce Lee's one-inch punch"


With Ray Kennedy and the European Cup in May 1977

Why did your own fortunes change?

I put everything to one side and started again with a fresh mind. I sorted out my apprenticeship and that gave me a bit of security away from football. I was told by Liverpool [at 14] that I was too small and Burnley said the same thing. I was 5ft 6in at the time and I had a quick growth spurt to around 5ft 9in. I did a bit of weight training and grew muscle on my chest. That gave me a bit of confidence.

I progressed into South Liverpool's first team in the Northern Premier League where I played with real men, against real men. There were lots of competitive derbies against sides like Marine and Skelmersdale United. You had to fight to win, it toughened me up.

One winter night we were playing Matlock Town at the old Holly Park ground. It was freezing, pouring down with rain. I was pulling mud out of my hair, the pitch was a bog. Not many people were watching so I noticed this old fella wearing a flat cap with a dog on a lead who walked around the perimeter of the pitch, meeting me by the corner flag. I went to take a corner and he started talking to me.

He said: 'Alright Jimmy' so I just said, 'Alright'. I was thinking: we're 2-1 down here and he wants to have a chat. As I went to knock the ball into the area, he goes, 'Would you like a trial with Liverpool?' I was trying to concentrate and he was putting me off so I told him where to go, using a few swear-words. A few weeks later after a training session, South Liverpool's manager Alan Hampson called me into his office. Little did I know but the fella was Tom Saunders. I didn't recognise him because it was so dark.

What was the biggest difference between Liverpool and South Liverpool?

Everything! In my first week at Liverpool, I went shin-to-shin with Ronnie Moran, who was the toughest of men. He wasn't happy – screaming, 'You're not playing alehouse football now, you know!' I really caught him. I thought he'd have it in for me after that. But I think he respected me instead. The biggest difference was the physical presence of the players – everybody was fitter than me, it was hard to keep up.

Liverpool signed me for £500. When Billy Shankly offered me a contract, I had to say no because I wanted to finish my apprenticeship as an electrician, just in case the football didn't work out. It meant that for two years I was semi-pro at Liverpool and full-time at Evans Medical on Speke Boulevard. I'd go and clock on at work at 8am on a Monday, clock out at nine, then head up to Anfield and get the bus down to Melwood with the lads.


Matchday programme star in March 1978

I'd do my training, head back to Anfield, have a bite to eat, and when everyone else went home I'd go into work again from 2pm until 5pm in the factory. It was tiring. I didn't think I could compete with the other players on a level every day, but Liverpool were good with me and I persisted with the apprenticeship, although I couldn't wait to finish and have a proper crack at being a footballer. It was all worth it.



Many of your 46 goals for LFC were scored from long range...

I was fortunate. I had quite a rigid technique, I didn't take long to get a shot away. It was like Bruce Lee with a one-inch punch. I could stab the ball without much back-lift, which meant I could generate power.
I had it when I was a kid. I was one of the smallest in the school but was asked to take goal-kicks for the keeper. The balls were heavy and he couldn't get the kick out of the penalty box. I was clearing the halfway line.

New Liverpool signing back in May 1973

Famously you became good mates with fellow midfielder Reds Ray Kennedy – why was that?

We shared a room together on away trips with Liverpool for eight years. I started off with [left-back] Joey Jones because we were around the same age. Joey didn't travel one weekend and Ronnie [Moran] asked me if I fancied rooming with Ray instead. We hit it off straightaway. We were compatible, maybe because he was from the North East and they have a similar attitude and sense of humour to us Scousers. He stood no nonsense and, like me, he could have an argument with anyone. I knew I could learn off him too. He was a seasoned professional. He'd already done the double with Arsenal [in season 1970/71], taking everything in his stride. If I had any concerns I knew I could confide in him. Very quickly we were big buddies and it's a friendship that exists today.

"I learned from Ray, he stood no nonsense and took things in his stride"

Was it hard leaving Liverpool?

I didn't want to go [in 1981] but Bob Paisley put the question to me twice, and when that happens you know you're not in the manager's plans. There are a few reasons why it happened but you can read about them in the book, otherwise there'll be nothing else left to tell! I played professionally until I was 41 and enjoyed a good career after leaving Liverpool. I loved it at both Brighton and Southampton. But all I really wanted to do was play for Liverpool. When I was there, I had offers from Italian clubs but turned them down.

As a three-time European Cup winner at Liverpool, has continental competition changed much since your time?

It has. The exposure is huge now. The football is a lot quicker and the good teams know how to slow things down to their pace. When we won it, there was an element of mystery about a lot of the teams because there wasn't the accessibility or the money to send scouts abroad regularly. Players didn't move between countries as much. Because it was knock-out all the way through, I think the pressure was greater then too. You had to be in it to win it. The pressure was on straightaway, from game one. It was competitive from the word go.

What does it take for a team to go far in Europe?

Experience. We don't have much of that at the moment with only Steven Gerrard, Skrtel, Lucas and Johnson still around from the last time we were in the Champions League. When I joined the team in the 70s, everyone else had played in Europe before. It was totally different to a First Division game. The others pulled me through – they knew how to win from certain positions. They recognised a situation and how to change it if they needed to.

We appreciated that sometimes you had to go to places like Barcelona and make it an awful spectacle for the crowd. We were prepared to do it. In my first season, we won the UEFA Cup and that gave us the confidence to go and win the European Cup a few years later. We could win playing ugly, we could win playing free-flowing football. You have to find a way to win the game.



Jimmy's autobiography *Hard Case* is published on 2 October 2014

Euro zone

It's a return to the Champions League after five years – but there's still plenty of experience

Glen Johnson

The England full-back has played in 18 UEFA Champions League fixtures, including three for Liverpool. In 2003/04 he made his UCL debut for Chelsea against MSK Zilina in Slovakia before scoring in the return leg, two days after his 19th birthday.

Glen featured in nine Champions League matches that season as Chelsea progressed to the semi-finals; the following season, 04/05, he played another six times as the Blues once again reached the last four. Having played in the goalless draw with Liverpool at Stamford Bridge, he was an unused sub in the epic semi-final second leg at Anfield.

Then came three group appearances for Liverpool in 2009/10 – twice against Debrecen VSC and away to Fiorentina – before the Reds switched to the Europa League.





Kolo Toure

Ivory Coast international defender Kolo is a veteran of eight UEFA Champions League campaigns with Arsenal and Manchester City. He was part of the Gunners team that reached the 2006 final against Barcelona but ended up on the losing side as Barca triumphed 2-1 in Paris, late goals from Samuel Eto'o (now with Everton) and Juliano Belletti finally settling the match.

He also played in the 2007/08 quarter-final matches against Liverpool which saw the Reds progress 5-3 on aggregate following a 4-2 second leg win here at Anfield (Hyypia, Torres, Gerrard and Babel getting the home side's goals) and the following year's semi-final where they lost to Manchester United. His most recent appearance in the competition came for Manchester City against Bayern Munich at the Allianz Arena in September 2011, the Bavarians prevailing 2-1 on the night.



Dejan Lovren

He appeared in two Champions League campaigns for Olympique Lyonnais in 2010/11 and 11/12.

Dejan made his debut in a 1-0 home win against Schalke 04 in September 2010 and also featured in games against Hapoel Tel Aviv and SL Benfica. He then played in a Round of 16 tie against Real Madrid: a 1-1 draw in France followed by a 3-0 defeat in the Bernabeu.

Twelve months later Lyon again came through their group phase, finishing as runners-up to Real but ahead of Ajax and Dinamo Zagreb. Dejan missed the Round of 16 ties against APOEL which ended with the Cypriots progressing to the quarter-finals following a penalty shoot-out.





Javier Manquillo

A neck injury sustained in a Madrid derby forced the full-back to miss the latter part of Atletico Madrid's run to the UEFA Champions League final last season. Prior to that setback, Javier had twice been involved in the matchday squad for the world's most prestigious club tournament.

He was an unused substitute when Diego Simeone's side drew 1-1 away at Zenit St Petersburg. And when FC Porto travelled to the Estadio Vicente Calderon he was in the team that won 2-0, meaning that the Spanish side topped Group G with an unbeaten record.



Steven Gerrard

Liverpool FC's captain went into the game at FC Basel on 82 UEFA Champions League appearances for the Reds – just nine behind club record-holder Jamie Carragher.

Steven was just 24 when he lifted the trophy in 2005, scoring that vital headed goal in the comeback against AC Milan. Earlier in the competition of course he thundered home one of Anfield's great goals against Olympiacos to complete another stunning fightback and secure Liverpool's qualification from the group phase.

Mamadou Sakho

Season 2012/13 saw Paris Saint-Germain FC return to the UEFA Champions League after an absence of eight years, and the Parisians went some way to making up for lost time by reaching the quarter-finals. They were unfortunate to exit via away-goals at the hands of Barcelona.

Mamadou captained the side for a group match at FC Porto and made two further appearances in the Round of 16 victory over Valencia. He missed the subsequent tie with Barca.





Daniel Sturridge

Daniel already has a Champions League winners' medal – in 2012 he was on the bench for Chelsea's spot-kick win over Bayern Munich in the final in Germany.

For the bulk of that campaign he was a regular name on the teamsheet in Europe, while the previous year he'd registered his first goals in the tournament– scoring away to MSK Zilina then at home to the Slovakian side (along with fellow future Red, Glen Johnson).

Sturridge had already played twice for Chelsea in the 2012/13 tournament, so he was cup-tied for the UEFA Europa League when he joined Liverpool in January 2013.



Fabio Borini

The striker was just 18 and a regular in Chelsea's reserve side when manager Carlo Ancelotti named his fellow Italian in their UEFA Champions League squad for the 2009/10 campaign. A role as an unused sub in the opening group game with FC Porto was followed by a tournament debut in a home tie with APOEL of Cyprus.







Martin Skrtel

To play in the Champions League is the dream for every player," the centre-back has said. That hope became a reality two months after the Slovakian joined Liverpool from Zenit St Petersburg in the January transfer window of 2008. He ran out at the San Siro where a fine Fernando Torres goal earned a 1-0 victory for Rafa Benitez's team over Roberto Mancini's Internazionale Milano.

Martin became a regular in the LFC side that reached the last four that season, and also the team that progressed to the quarter-finals a year later. In total he's made 16 appearances for the Reds in the tournament.







Lucas

The Brazilian midfielder's LFC debut in the competition came back in August 2007. French side Toulouse were the visitors to Anfield in the qualifying round of that year's tournament and Lucas replaced Momo Sissoko in the second half of Liverpool's 4-0 second-leg victory.

He's made 16 appearances for the Reds in the competition, including standout performances over two legs against Inter Milan in the first knock-out round of 07/08, and Real Madrid at the same stage in 2008/09.

That season he scored his only UEFA Champions League goal to date – in the thrilling 4-4 draw with Chelsea at Stamford Bridge in a quarter-final second leg.

Emre Can

When Emre signed for the club in the summer, former Reds midfielder Dietmar Hamann noted: "If you play six or seven games in the Champions League – last season Bayer Leverkusen got into the knockout stages – then you've got to be ready to play for any team in the tournament."

As Didi says, the 20-year-old enjoyed some valuable experience during 2013/14. Operating in a number of different positions, he was regularly involved as Sami Hyypia's team progressed to the last 16 where they were eliminated by PSG.





Mario Balotelli

Mario, still only 24, already has 12 European goals and a UEFA Champions League winners' medal to his name.

In November 2008, in a 3-3 draw against Cypriot side Anorthosis Famagusta he became the youngest Internazionale Milano player ever to score in the tournament. Inter went on to be crowned European champions the following season, and Balotelli made eight appearances in their run to the final (he was an unused substitute on the night they won the trophy).

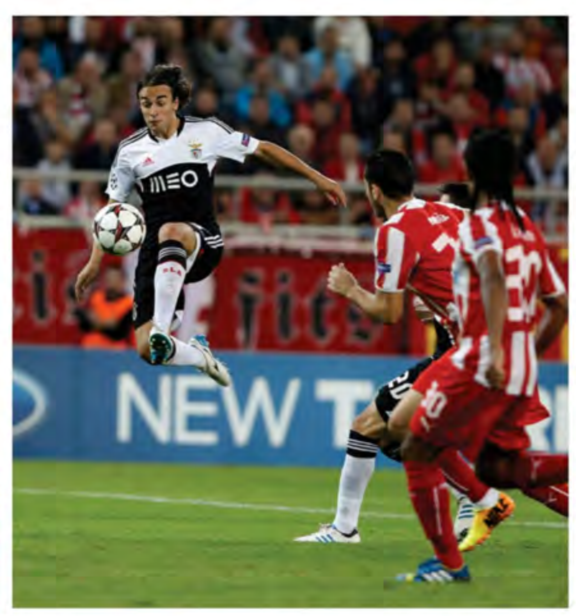
At Manchester City he was part of a squad entering the UEFA Champions League for the first time in the club's history, and he scored twice in the group stages. At AC Milan in 2013/13 he scored twice in the group phase – away to AFC Ajax (a penalty) then Celtic.

Lazar Markovic

The Serbian winger, 20, has already been involved in three UEFA Champions League campaigns. The first two came during his time at Partizan Belgrade. In 2011/12 he helped his side ease past Macedonian side FK Shkendija in the second qualifying round before they were eliminated by Genk. The next year followed a similar pattern as Partizan comfortably defeated Valetta of Malta before losing both legs of a third-round tie with AEL Limassol of Cyprus.

A move to Benfica in 2013 ensured that Lazar played in the group stages for the first time. He featured in five fixtures as they finished third behind PSG and Olympiacos.





Philippe Coutinho

The Brazilian has tasted Champions League action in the blue-and-black stripes of Inter Milan. He featured in six games for Inter during the 2010/11 campaign, including two against Tottenham. He made a late sub's appearance in the quarter-final against Schalke 04, replacing Wesley Sneijder for the final 10 minutes in Germany. The following season Philippe played in three group games – two against Trabzonspor and the other against CSKA Moskva in the San Siro.



It takes time adjusting to a new club and country – but it's worth it

Didi HAMANN



When I first arrived in England in 1998 I already knew I needed to learn the language. The fact that Kenny Dalglish was my manager at Newcastle and Terry McDermott was his assistant only reinforced it to me, as they obviously both speak English but in very different ways.

I'd studied some English at school, unfortunately that was nothing like how people spoke. And then there was the Geordie accent to take into account too. Initially it was a real struggle. I had lessons, I listened to the radio and watched TV – it all made a difference.

Liverpool obviously brought in a number of players from abroad during the summer and my main advice for them is to learn the language as quickly as possible. How a player approaches that can depend on how committed they are to the transfer. If they really want to succeed they'll do everything needed to make it possible.

I was fully committed to doing well in England. Despite being a regular in the Bayern Munich team and an international, I felt that I wasn't going to fulfill my potential there. I thought people still viewed me as a kid who would stay at the club forever. I wanted to improve and knew moving abroad would help me to.

So I was always going to give my all to become a success in the Premier League and a big part of that was learning the language. I also reasoned that if a club was going to pay my wages, the least I could do was be able to communicate with everyone there.

Quickly I realised that I couldn't live the same life as I had in Germany. I was in a new country and things were obviously different. TV was just one example. I watched British TV because I thought it would help me to understand things here. Nowadays a lot of foreign players have satellite dishes that enable them to watch the same programmes they used to at home. It might sound like a small thing, but it can make a difference to your acclimatisation.

"From my experience fans might want a photo but then leave you alone"

Another aspect is getting to know the area. We had a baby at the time but we still made the effort to go the shops or into Newcastle city-centre. I know most people now want a photo on their phone if they see a player somewhere, but that's not a lot to ask for. From my experiences, fans in the north of England might look for an autograph or shake your hand, but they'll usually leave you alone after that. It's not like in some countries where fanatical fans will surround a player out in public.



Didi settled quickly, initially at Newcastle

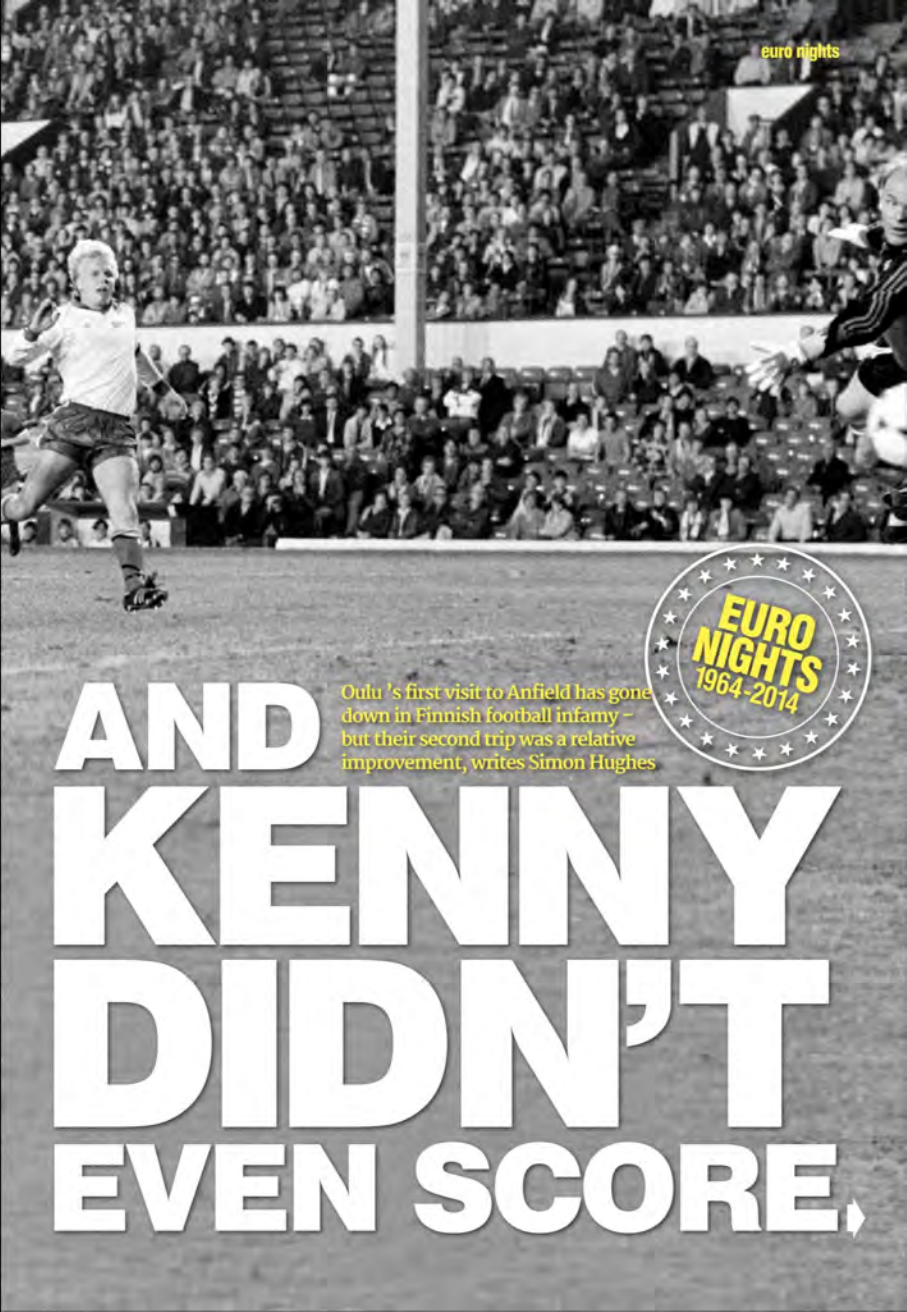
Bringing in a player from abroad is usually a punt for any manager, whatever the club. Some of them just don't work. Most people won't remember Newcastle signing a Serbian guy called Silvio Maric when I was there. He never settled.

Sometimes they simply aren't good enough. On other occasions it can be family problems: his partner doesn't have the same immediate social circle as the player gets from going in to training each day. That can make things harder.

But if a player who is good enough does make every possible effort to adjust to life in England, there is no reason why it can't go well. When I left Germany I never thought England would become my home, but it has.

Follow Didi on Twitter @DietmarHamann


10-1



AND KENNY DIDN'T EVEN SCORE

Oulu 's first visit to Anfield has gone down in Finnish football infamy – but their second trip was a relative improvement, writes Simon Hughes

Phil Neal goes close in the second leg of October 1980

For tourists, the town of Oulu in Finland's vast interior is the entry point to Lapland. Until the late 1990s when a Norwegian team from Tromso, 250 miles inside the Arctic Circle, reached the UEFA Cup for the first time, Oulu qualified as the most northerly outpost in European football.

Tromso's emergence coincided with the decline of Oulu Palloseura, a club known as OPS, one that at the beginning of the 1980s played in the European Cup twice. They lost to Liverpool on both occasions, having secured a credible draw in the first home leg and a narrow defeat in the second game at their Raatti Staidum 12 months later.

"In 100 years time when people look back at our history the games against Liverpool will still be recognised as our most famous nights," says former OPS general manager Miika Juntunen. "The way it is at the moment, it's hard to imagine us playing in Europe again."

OPS had risen from the lower reaches of what was called *Mestaruussarja*, the top division of Finnish football, in 1978 to become champions in successive seasons. Their reward in season 1980/81 was a tie against opponents, Liverpool FC, with experience of 101 European matches since their first encounter

"Show what I could do against Liverpool and it could change my career"

with KR Reykjavik in 1964.

Reds manager Bob Paisley, a person involved in all of those games as either a coach or manager, was determined not to make it a hat-trick of first-round exits in the European Cup after defeats to Nottingham Forest and Georgisan team Dinamo Tbilisi in the previous two campaigns. He'd described the loss to Brian Clough's Forest as "the biggest disappointment of my life," after missing out on a third successive European crown – adding that the game in Finland "will be on a poor pitch against a team of enthusiastic part-timers."

The *Liverpool Echo* noted that for the first leg at Oulu's Raatti Stadium in September 1980, Ian Rush would appear on the bench for the first time since signing from Chester City the previous May. 'Even that represents a tremendous leap in his career from comparative obscurity in the lower divisions', the newspaper commented.

Among the carpenters, electricians and army lieutenants in the OPS team was a Geordie, Keith Armstrong. The midfielder, who had moved to Finland on loan from Newcastle United, believed that the game could be a platform for the rest of his professional life: "If I can show what I can do against a team like Liverpool it could change my whole career."

Armstrong was accompanied by Glaswegian Hugh Smith as well as five Finnish internationals. Twenty-



THE TOP TEN HIT PARADE!

MAN OF THE MATCH

Golden Graeme





Oulu goalkeeper Jukka Rantanen under siege again

year-old sweeper Leo Houtsonen was regarded as the key man and speculation at the time linked him with moves to Germany and Italy. "This could be my chance," he wondered.

According to the *Echo*, Houtsonen and his defensive colleagues 'operated a well-polished offside trap' on the night of the first leg in Finland – a trap which Liverpool's forwards fell into no fewer than 19 times. Although Terry McDermott curled Liverpool into a 15th-minute lead, the unknowns from Oulu equalised through Seppo Puotiniemi with 10 minutes to go and forced an unlikely draw. At the final whistle, fans streamed onto the pitch and held the home players aloft as if they were European champions. "This was a major fillip for Finnish football," Juntunen says. "Nobody believed it was possible. We partied well into the night."



Sammy Lee was among the scorers in the 10-1 win

Despite the result, Juntunen still insists that the aim in the second leg was merely to keep the score down. "But that didn't happen. It was a disaster." OPS's 10-1 mauling at Anfield stands as a record defeat for a Finnish team in European competition.

'It certainly wasn't a football game as we understand it', observed the *Echo*, as hat-tricks from McDermott and Graeme Souness were assisted by further goals from David Fairclough (two), Sammy Lee and Ray Kennedy. Paisley described their opponents as "farcical," adding that he couldn't believe that he wasted sleep over them following the first leg, while Juntonen recalls the feeling of desperation: "We were four-nil down at half-time. I was praying that there would be a floodlight failure or something to save us for the second half. But that didn't happen either."

Although Liverpool struggled by their own standards in the domestic league that season, eventually finishing fifth, the victory over OPS propelled them in Europe, with Alan Kennedy's strike enough to beat Real Madrid

"Nobody believed that draw in the first leg – we partied all night"

1-0 in the final, held in Paris.

A bad start to the following season suggested the Reds might find it difficult to find success in the league again, losing to both Ipswich Town and Wolves in the opening weeks without scoring. But after their demolition of OPS a year before, Bob Paisley, so the *Echo* mused, could have 'sent his reserves to Finland with an untroubled mind' when Liverpool drew another trip to Lapland at the draw in Zurich. Armstrong, who'd now made his move to OPS permanent, warned that the pitch at the Raatti was "even worse than last year."

Again Liverpool struggled with the conditions and only a Kenny Dalglish goal with six minutes to go separated the sides going into the return at



Ray Kennedy scored in the 7-1 win of September 1981

Anfield two weeks later. "Despite our performance at home we weren't hopeful," says Juntunen.

A day before the second leg, Bill Shankly died. The news plunged Merseyside into mourning. Chairman John Smith described him as "an outstanding symbol of guts, determination and success who fought for the good name of his adopted city at every opportunity."

While the Kop chanted Shankly's name, Liverpool rattled home seven goals on the night. This time they arrived from McDermott (two), Dalglish, Lawrenson, Rush, Ray Kennedy and David Johnson.

"To lose 10-1 and 7-0 at Liverpool was really bad for us," concludes Juntunen. "But even Bayern Munich or Juventus would not have relished the idea of facing Liverpool in the first round, one year after another. We must have been the unluckiest club in Europe."

"To face Liverpool twice in two years – how unlucky could you be"

OPS have never played in Europe since. After finishing sixth in their domestic league in 1981 they suffered several relegations, and by 1984 they were struggling to avoid demotion to the Lapland amateur leagues following financial difficulties.

While Juntunen blames players for



FOOTBALL IN FINLAND

Oulu has four football clubs. AC Oulu play in *Ykkonen*, Finland's equivalent of the Second Division while FC OPA are in *Kakkonen* (the Third Division) along with Oulu Luistinseura and Oulu Palloseura. Finland's strongest team, however, are in the capital city where HJK have won five *Veikkausliiga* titles in succession. "HJK are the best-run club in the country," says journalist Egan Richardson. "They have more than 1,000 players in their junior ranks, they have the pick of the players in Finland and have more sponsorship money than anyone else."

Having been knocked out of the UEFA Champions League in the qualifying rounds by APOEL Nicosia of Cyprus, this season HJK are competing in the Europa League. In the group stages their opponents are FC Bruges, FC Copenhagen and Torino.

instigating the club's demise – those "who with the promise of big wages were quick to move to Norway and Sweden" – Finnish-based journalist Egan Richardson believes OPS's problems are common with many clubs in the country.

Since 1990 alone, there have been nine different champions of *Veikkausliiga*, the reformed version of *Mestaruussarja*. While this may be exciting and means the competition avoids criticisms like those levelled at the English Premier League for being too predictable in terms of contestants at the top end of the table, it also reveals flaws.

"Teams reach success and disappear very quickly," Richardson says. "It is true that a lot of players move abroad too soon when they have achieved comparatively very little – apart from Sami Hyypia of course – and this in part is what led to problems at OPS.

"There is not enough money in Finnish football for clubs to keep their players and improve standards, even in relation to Sweden and Norway where clubs in those leagues enjoy far greater resources. As soon as a half-decent young player has a good season, they move to one of the other Scandinavian Leagues, and this means that the infrastructure isn't there to maintain a competitive professional league where teams are built over years and it's more stable. One season a team may win the league and two years later they are narrowly avoiding relegation."

The problems in Finnish domestic football have meant long-term implications for OPS. With 130,000 inhabitants, Oulu is the most populous and important city in northern Finland. Culturally it is recognised as a place of 21st century Finnish expressionism. Many writers, artists and musicians reside in the city. A variety of concerts, rock, classical and jazz as well as other cultural events such as the Air Guitar World Championships, takes place every year.

"Oulu suffers, though, because it is so far from anywhere else," continues Richardson, adding that it is located 380 miles north of Helsinki with temperatures regularly dropping to minus-10 in the winter. "It makes it an inhospitable place and although it is great for ice-hockey, it is no place for football."

"Oulu tends to suffer because it's so far from anywhere else here"

ROUND BY ROUND

1980/81 European Cup
1R 1L Oulu 1 (Puotiniemi) Liverpool 1 (McDermott)
1R 2L Liverpool 10 (Souness 3, McDermott 3, Lee, Kennedy, Fairclough 2) Oulu 1 (Armstrong)

1981/82 European Cup
1R 1L Oulu 0 Liverpool 1 (Dalglish)
1R 2L Liverpool 7 (Dalglish, McDermott 2, R Kennedy, Johnson, Rush, Lawrenson) Oulu 0

Last season Oulu Palloseura finished ninth in *Ykkonen*, the second tier of Finnish football, and were relegated to *Kakkonen*, a competition divided between three zones: southwest, southeast and north. Although there are hopes of an instant return to the second tier of Finnish football, nothing is guaranteed.

"In *Kakkonen*, there are so many derbies and every game is a fight," Juntunen says. "Things will only get better with hard work and a bit of financial investment."



Graeme Souness congratulates Mark Lawrenson on his goal

"IF WE WORK HARD WE CAN HAVE A GREAT SEASON"

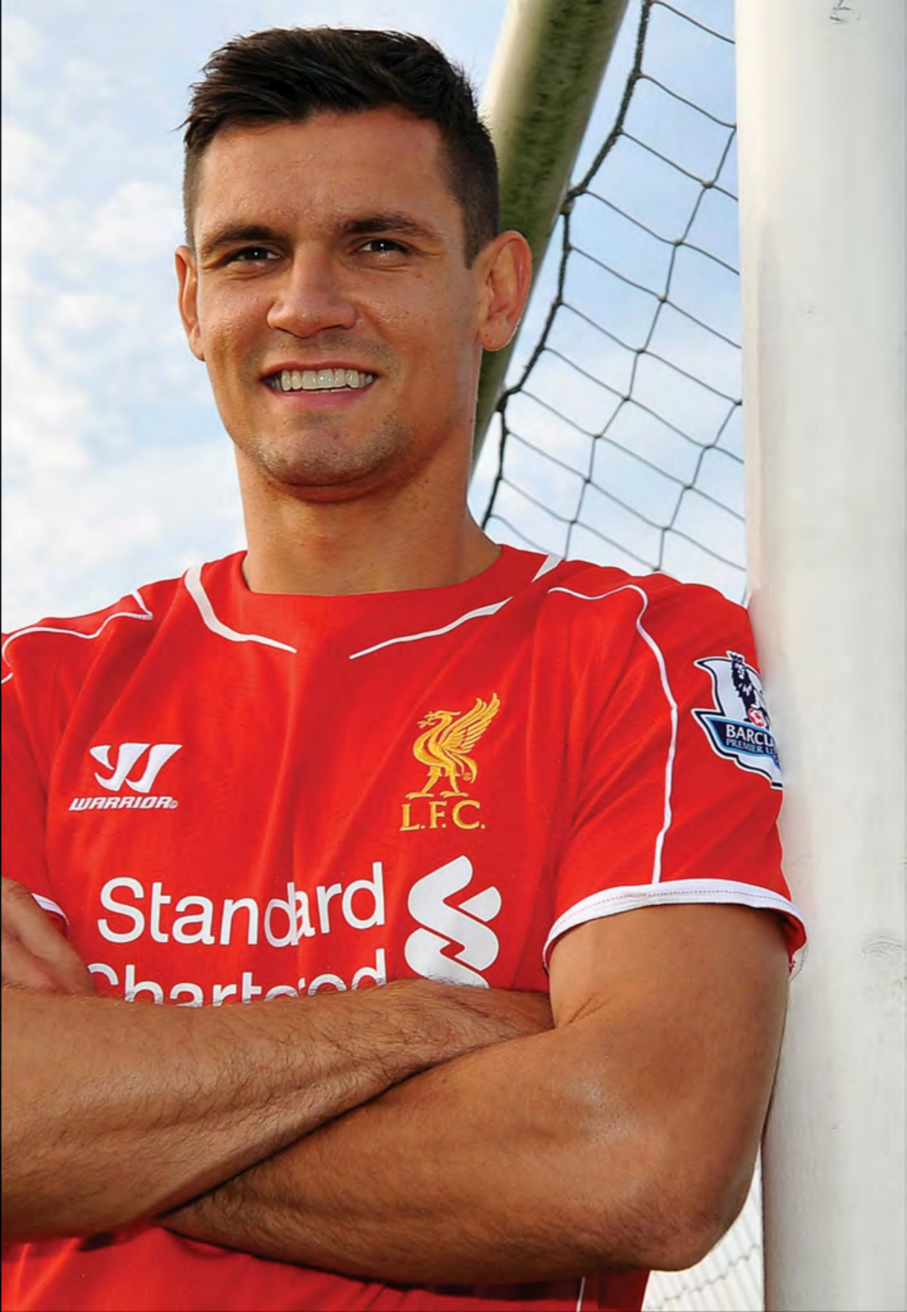
Dejan Lovren is not only a cultured central defender – he has wisdom beyond his years, as John Hynes discovers

Hard work, non-stop effort, sheer determination to improve… The same themes crop up regularly during conversations with Liverpool FC's Croatian centre-back, Dejan Lovren.

Despite being an international footballer who featured in the World Cup finals, he appears to be someone who is never happy with the standard he's reached. He has a relentless desire to get better. It probably comes from his parents, he reasons.

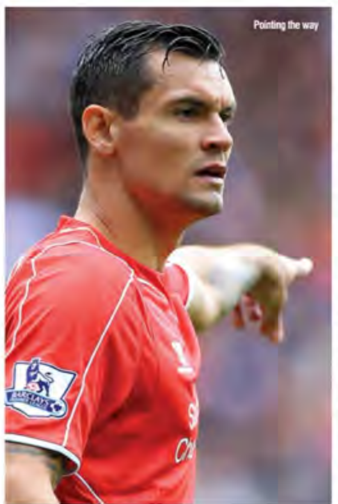
"They are workaholics. All their lives they've been busy. Even now my dad still wants to work. He doesn't want money or anything else from me."

Lovren, 25, sees that same desire and dedication present in his younger brother Davor. "My parents are strong characters and they've definitely passed that on to us. My brother is 16, a left-footed winger who plays on the right. He's just signed a professional contract with Dinamo Zagreb. It means a lot to him and all of us. I'd love to play with or against him one day, although I might be very old if or when that


WARRIOR
L.F.C.
Standard


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Wedding
Anniversary

With the manager and Simon Mignolet at Melwood


Pointing the way

happens. If he keeps working and improving as he has been he can become very good."

With an upbringing during which the importance of hard work was regularly reinforced, Dejan probably recognised a kindred spirit in Brendan Rodgers. The Ulsterman is another individual who regularly preaches the rewards that industry and application will bring.

The manager's methods and encouragement among the squad have been proven too, with players such as Daniel Sturridge, Philippe Coutinho, Raheem Sterling and Jordan Henderson all undoubtedly developing their game under his tutelage. The style of football was also something that appealed to Lovren when, after an impressive season 2013/14 with Southampton, he was considering leaving the South Coast during the summer.

"I'm someone who always wants to play the ball on the ground when it's possible. I'm not a player who wants to just kick it long. I think football is a game to play properly – it's not just about kicking the ball anywhere. I'm glad Brendan has seen that in me and brought me in to help the team to play that way."

"I want to play the ball on the ground – it's not about kicking it anywhere"

Alongside that ball-playing ability is a love of physical battles that makes Lovren a prototype for the modern-day centre-back. When asked about the rugged element of competing with powerful strikers on a weekly basis his verdict is: "I like it. I love that passion in the English game. I'm a defender who likes to make contact with opponents. But I'm not an aggressive defender who will go in to make brutal challenges."

Centre-back is undoubtedly one of the key positions in any side – those who fill the role need to maintain the highest standards if success is to be enjoyed. When the team is under pressure in a game, it can often be the man in the middle of the back-four who is required to hold things together. That's a burden some would




The boss with the new Reds full-backs

understandably shy away from. Lovren fully embraces it. "I always have. I've always liked responsibility, I like being an organiser in the team. I don't know why that is. Maybe I feel older than I actually am."

His willingness to take charge or address an issue was demonstrated early in the season. As one of three new defenders – alongside Spanish full-backs Alberto Moreno and Javier Manquillo – he was quick to realise that good communication at the back needed to be a priority. "I spoke to Brendan about it. When you have so many new players it's important to get it right. That's not easy when some of the lads are still learning the language, but they'll pick it up quickly."

Communicating with fellow centre-back Mamadou Sakho has been a lot more straightforward thanks to Lovren's three-and-a -half seasons at Lyon. "I've been speaking to him in French sometimes – one minute French and one minute English," he laughs.

While the bedding-in process for

"I've always liked to be an organiser in the team"

Lovren and the seven other players who arrived in the summer is ongoing, it's inevitable there might be a setback along the way. "Of course everyone can make a mistake. We need to learn from it and not repeat them. Nobody wants to make a mistake, but the start of the season is probably the better time to do so because you can still rectify it. You don't want to make them near the end [of the season] when games are vital.

"For all of us it's important to adapt quickly. It's been easier for me because I was in the Premier League with Southampton for one year [before I came here]. I adapted to

Facing the media



Commanding in the air against Ludogorets





Training hard but enjoying it

"It's not easy to adapt but our new signings are all intelligent"

England quickly and I know that the players who have come here from Spain, Portugal, Germany or Italy will adapt as soon as they can. It's not easy to play exactly as you did in a different league.

"However, they are all intelligent guys and good players. Having so many games in the different competitions will help them with the process."

Spending time in his company allows you to quickly see why Lovren was brought to the club. There is a calmness about him that must offer reassurance to those who work alongside him at Melwood on a daily basis. He takes his time to think about questions before replying. And, while the mention of conceding goals might make some defenders bristle, he deals with the subject in a relaxed manner. "It happens, that's football. Anything can happen in football.

With his family forced to leave war-torn Yugoslavia for Germany when he was still a child, he is able to put what occurs on the field into perspective. He never seems to get carried away when the team wins or too downbeat after a defeat. Whatever the result, he knows there is always more work to do. Again that's something he's keen to emphasise when asked about what the Reds can achieve in 2014/15.

"We have potential," he declares before pausing to consider his reply some more. "I didn't come here just to play," he continues. "I came to Liverpool to win something and I think we can win something. From what I've seen in my first few months here – the manager, the team and the whole atmosphere around the club – I think we can have a great season. We just need to work hard to make it happen."

CURRENT PL CROATS

Niko Kranjcar
Formerly with Portsmouth and Tottenham, the attacking midfielder was recently reunited with former Spurs boss Harry Redknapp for the third time when the latter was appointed QPR manager. Prior to returning to London, Niko had been with Dinamo Kiev.



Nikica Jelavic
A goalscorer for Everton against the Reds in the 2012 FA Cup semi-final at Wembley, the striker's two-year spell at Goodison Park ended last January and he's now with fellow Prem team Hull City.



Previously in the Prem: Slaven Bilic (West Ham 1996-97; Everton 1997-00); Igor Biscan (Liverpool 2000-05); Alen Boksic (Middlesbrough 2000-03); Vedran Corluka (Manchester City 2007-08; Tottenham 2008-12); Eduardo (Arsenal 2007-10); Ivan Klasnic (Bolton 2009-12); Luka Modric (Tottenham 2008-12); Igor Stimac (Derby County 1995-99; West Ham 1999-01); Davor Suker (Arsenal 1999-2000; West Ham 2000-01).


UEFA
WOMEN'S
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE

EUROPE HERE WE COME

Liverpool Ladies midfielder Amanda Da Costa previews her team's UEFA Women's Champions League bow

I think as a society in general we tend to have a fear of the unknown. There are many obstacles to face when you think about an unknown that lies ahead of you, many of them psychological. How do you prepare for something that you have yet to experience? Not physically – that is the easy part! But mentally how do you figure out how you are going to solve an equation with so many variables and unknown values? I've never been good at maths so I won't try to compare this to some sort of mathematical equation, but you get the idea!

As I sat at Anfield watching the men's team take on PFC Ludogorets, I was in the presence of what I would be experiencing in only a few short weeks. Liverpool opened their 2014 UEFA Champions League campaign against an eager Bulgarian side. They were a dangerous opponent considering it was their first-ever appearance in the group stages of the Champions League, which in turn held no expectations and gave them freedom.

As Liverpool Ladies prepare for our Champions League debut [on Wednesday 8 October] I sat there imagining my own team as Ludogorets against a more seasoned continental team in Linkopings. While I am always rooting for a Reds victory, Ludogorets were pleasantly surprising in their first Champions League outing. They proved extremely difficult to break down while also exhibiting a great joy and excitement



"The team from Bulgaria showed no fear - and neither will we"

when pushing numbers forwards. Having been saved by the woodwork once and denied by Simon Mignolet on a separate occasion, they were by no means the underdogs on the evening – which gives me a sense of confidence moving into my own first Champions League experience.

Anyone in the women's football community whom I have spoken to about Linkopings has only had high praise for the Swedish side. As newcomers to the tournament this year, we are placed in a unique position. While many have high expectations for us given our stellar league-winning season in 2013, I am expecting us to go into our first match (at our own home of the Select Security Stadium) with the same sense of urgency and freedom as we did when we started our FA Women's Super League campaign in 2013 as 'underdogs'.

We were a brand new side last season, with many character-building opportunities through the course of the campaign, as we were faced with the challenge of playing and becoming friends and team-mates with new players from all over the world. Not only did we embrace the different personalities among the squad but we flourished and grew stronger as the season progressed.



The draw as it happened

Signing a shirt for one young fan

WHO ARE LINKOPINGS?

The team from southern Sweden were formed in 2003 and have one top-flight title to their name, finishing as champions in 2009. Last time round, 2010/11, they progressed the Champions League quarter-finals. They remained unbeaten but went out on away-goals to Arsenal.

The Swedish Cup holders were somewhat fortunate to take their place in this season's competition. They finished third in the table behind champions Rosengard and runners-up Tyreso FF. But the latter had to renounce their place in the tournament due to economic problems. Linkopings took their place.

Amanda was impressed by both the Redmen and Ludogorets at Anfield

Towards the end of the season when the pressure at the top of the table was at its closest in history, we never swayed from our strengths as a unit, and were able to prove to everyone who didn't think we would make it that it was time to believe in Liverpool Ladies.

I've always been a believer that great teams create their own luck in finding a way to win football matches.



Boss Matt Beard

"Being on the brink of something new and great is so exciting for Liverpool"

I truly feel that given this opportunity of competing in the UEFA Women's Champions League, we will have the chance to prove that we are a great team to the whole of Europe. After all, this is why we play this game! The motivation is to compete against the best and to show up to training every day to prove our worth to ourselves and our peers.

Being on the brink of something new and great is a very exciting time for the Liverpool community, for both the men and women's game. While I may never know exactly what lies ahead, and have some nerves about the uncertainty of the future, I can only hope that both myself and my team will channel such nervous energy into every game we play. Having nerves and a small amount of fear is what makes champions tick: feeling the tingles in your fingertips as you line up in front of your fans before a match, or having your legs shake with the increasing anticipation of your first touch on the pitch is pure adrenaline.

I can feel it as I write this column, just thinking about it. Have no doubt: we will all be feeling it when we take to the field for the start of our European adventure.

CATCH THE MATCH

Liverpool Ladies' first match in European football will take place at the Select Security Stadium in Widnes on Wednesday 8 October with a 7.45pm kick-off. Tickets will be priced at £5 for adults and £2,50 for children and concessions. They can be purchased in advance at www.liverpoolfc.com/ladiestickets or at the turnstiles on matchday.


L.F.C.



Reporting on the young Reds on-loan around the country

Neil MELLOR



As a reporter with Sky Sports I cover a lot of matches in the Championship, League One and League Two. It allows me to keep an eye on some of Liverpool's young players out on loan.

This season Jordon Ibe is at Derby County, Joao Teixeira is at Brighton & Hove Albion and Brad Smith is at Swindon Town. They all face different challenges at clubs with different aspirations.

A loan spell can make a young player grow up. When you're in the reserve team or the Under-18s, you are in a comfort zone. Everything is done for you. As soon as you leave that and enter a first-team dressing-room, you've got to find a way to survive. You have to appreciate quickly that for the time being you are not a Liverpool player. You are a player of the club you are representing. You have to live and breathe that club.

It's no good thinking about Liverpool, believing you are going back there and everything is going to be okay just because you are on a decent deal that lasts a few more years. I think that's where some loan players have failed in the past. When you leave Liverpool temporarily, you start from scratch. You can't just turn up at the loan club and expect to be in the team. You have to earn that right by winning the respect of the dressing-room as well as the manager and the supporters.

If you go there with a big-time attitude you'll soon get found out. You quickly appreciate that opposition players see you as a target. They expect you to be good so they try even harder to stop you. That should be a challenge any player relishes. You should want to prove you are good – that you can influence a competitive game that really matters.

"For the time being you have to live and breathe your new club"



Brad Jones (right) in Swindon Town colours

Brad Smith appears to have settled very quickly at Swindon. The reports coming back are positive. He's playing every game at left-back for a team that is competing at the top end of the league table. Clearly his attitude has been spot-on in training. Otherwise a lower-league manager isn't going to take the risk in selecting him.

Teixeira has scored a few goals at Brighton, a team now managed by Sami Hyypia – a Liverpool legend. Brighton have been in the play-offs in the last two seasons. It is going to be very hard to achieve that this time round with a reasonable turnover of players during the summer. So it will be interesting to see how Joao deals with the expectations of the fans who might be disappointed in the team if it doesn't go as well as it has done in the recent past. When I went on loan to West Ham, the fans expected us to bounce back from the drop. The same thing happened much later at Sheffield Wednesday. Mentally, being in such situations aids your development if you approach it in the right way.

Ibe meanwhile finds himself in one of the Championship's best passing teams in Derby. They're very entertaining to watch and have a chance of going up automatically. Yet Steve McClaren has a reasonably settled team so Jordon will have to work very hard to get into the starting XI. You can't take anything for granted.

Elsewhere Andre Wisdom is now playing for West Brom. His progress over the last 18 months should, in theory, be the most interesting because he's spent time in the Championship with Derby last season, and is now in the Premier League; playing games week-in, week-out. Each time he's gone out on loan, he's made the step-up. Hopefully by next season he'll be ready to step into Liverpool's first team

I sent Andre a text when he agreed the deal at the Hawthorns, telling him that he'd enjoy working under Alan Irvine, the coach that got the best out of me. At Sheffield Wednesday he had some brilliant ideas and I enjoyed training every day. It'll be a tough season for him but I'm certain he'll return to Liverpool a better player.

Follow Neil on Twitter @NeilMellor33


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82 Man on a mission

Meet the amazing Mark Maddox, Reds fan and MND warrior



The bit at the back for Liverpool FC's legions of fans at home and all over the world...









THE MONTH AHEAD OCT

The Real deal

LFC's UEFA Champions League campaign hots up with the reigning champions in town on 22 October. Matchday three will see Cristiano Ronaldo, Gareth Bale, James Rodriguez and company in L4 for a much-anticipated fixture. Former Liverpool full-back Alvaro Arbeloa should also be in the travelling party for *Los Blancos*. The teams have met three times in the competition with the Reds coming out on top on each occasion. The first fixture came in the 1981 final in Paris with Alan Kennedy settling the issue to help Liverpool lift the trophy for the third time. In February 2009, Yossi Benayoun's goal gave Liverpool a 1-0 win in the Bernabeu before the Reds thrashed the Spaniards in the return leg on a memorable night at Anfield. Steven Gerrard scored twice (right) with his goals bookended by strikes from Fernando Torres and Andrea Dossena in a 4-0 triumph.

"The teams have met three times - each with a Reds victory"





BIRTHDAY REDS

Bruce Grobbelaar 57 on 6 October
Chris Lawler 71 on 20 October
Roy Evans 66 on 4 October
Sami Hyypia 41 on 7 October
Sebastian Coates 24 on 7 October
Larry Lloyd 66 on 6 October
Glenn Hysen 55 on 30 October
Willie Stevenson 75 on 26 October
Paul Ince 46 on 21 October
Phil Chisnall 72 on 27 October
Ian Rush 53 on 20 October
Paul Walsh 52 on 1 October
Ronny Rosenthal 51 on 11 October
David Johnson 63 on 23 October
Milan Baros 33 on 28 October



Anniversaries

21 years since Robbie Fowler scored all five goals in a 5-0 League Cup win over Fulham on 5 October
27 years since Ray Houghton joined the club on 19 October
40 years since Phil Neal signed for the Reds on 9 October
92 years since Harry Chambers scored a hat-trick in a 5-1 derby win over Everton at Anfield on 7 October
122 years since the legendary Matt McQueen and his brother Hugh made their debuts in LFC's first FA Cup tie at Anfield on 29 October

Reds will have Hull to play

Liverpool's third Barclays Premier League fixture of the month sees them host Hull City at Anfield on Saturday 25 October. Steve Bruce's Tigers took three points off the Reds in Humberside last season but Liverpool started 2014 with a 2-0 win over Hull at Anfield thanks to goals from Daniel Agger and Luis Suarez. City were busy on transfer deadline day, recruiting four newcomers: Mohamed Diame, Gaston Ramirez, Hatem Ben Arfa and club record signing Abel Hernandez. They joined the six previous summer additions of Robert Snodgrass, Jake Livermore, Andrew Robertson, Harry Maguire, Michael Dawson and ex-Red Tom Ince.





Book your Brucie tickets!

Legendary Liverpool goalkeeper Bruce Grobbelaar will be the guest speaker at a special Anfield event on Friday 28 November and tickets are now on sale.

During Bruce's glittering 14-year career with LFC he appeared 628 times for the Reds. His safe hands contributed to the club winning six First Division titles, three FA Cups and three League Cups and his acrobatic penalty heroics led to Liverpool winning the 1984 European Cup.

The evening will be hosted by Liverpool legend David Johnson and will include: red-carpet arrival, photo opportunities with the European Cup and arrival drink, a three-course meal and access to a fully-licensed bar. Tickets are priced at £65 and can be purchased by calling 0151 263 7744 or via the club's official website www.liverpoolfc.com.

BIG MONTH FOR LADIES

Liverpool Ladies are set for a busy October. The FA WSL season comes to a close with games at Arsenal on 5 October and at home to Bristol Academy on 12 October (2pm). Either side of those fixtures comes the Reds' bow in European competition. Matt Beard's team take on Swedish side Linkopings in the UEFA Women's Champions League Round of 32. The first leg will be held at the Select Security Stadium in Widnes on Wednesday 8 October (6.30pm) with tickets priced at £5 for adults and £2.50 for concessions. The return leg will be staged in Sweden on Thursday 16 October. The winners will face the victors of the tie between Icelandic side Stjarnan and Russians Zvezda-2005 in the last 16.




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You'll also get exclusive footage from Melwood and live press conferences before every game, uninterrupted commentary once the match kicks off and the latest reaction after the final whistle. Another exclusive feature – **All Time XI** – asks a former Red to select the best eleven players he ever played with or against. Already we've heard which Italy legend asked John Aldridge for his shirt, the former Red that narrowly missed out on Jason McAteer's team, and a Phil Thompson XI that includes ten of his ex-Anfield team-mates. Look out for a new episode every Friday.



And there's more. Every month LFCTV GO will be bringing you a **special feature-length video** that can't be seen anywhere else. Ahead of last month's Anfield derby, for instance, Robbie Fowler spoke in-depth about playing in the derby and looked ahead to that latest encounter. All this and much more on **LFCTV GO**. If you're not signed up already, head to **www.liverpool.com/video** and receive 12 months for the price of just 10!

SEASON TICKET HOLDERS

As a Season Ticket Holder there will be times when you cannot make it to a Barclays Premier League home match due to holidays or other commitments. If so, don't let your seat go empty and lose out on the opportunity to receive credit against the cost of your Season Ticket next summer.

Use the online Ticket Exchange service to release your ticket. You can use this service as many times as you want during the season. For more information regarding the Ticket Exchange please visit: www.liverpoolfc.com/tickets/ticket-exchange.



FIXTURE LIST 2014/2015

AUGUST

17	**Southampton** (H)	**2-1**
25	**Manchester City** (A)	1-3
31	**Tottenham Hotspur** (A)	3-0

SEPTEMBER

13	**Aston Villa** (H)	0-1
16	**PFC Ludogorets 1945 (H, UCL)**	**2-1**
20	**West Ham United** (A)	1-3
23	**Middlesbrough (H, COC 3)**	**2-2***
27	**Everton** (H, 12.45pm)	

OCTOBER

1	**FC Basel 1893 (A, 7.45pm UCL)**
4	**West Bromwich Albion** (H, 3pm)
19	**Queens Park Rangers** (A, 1.30pm)
22	**Real Madrid (H, 7.45pm UCL)**
25	**Hull City** (H, 3pm)
28/29	**Capital One Cup** fourth round

NOVEMBER

1	**Newcastle United** (A, 12.45pm)
4	**Real Madrid (A, 7.45pm UCL)**
8	**Chelsea** (H, 12.45pm)
23	**Crystal Palace** (A, 1.30pm)
26	**PFC Ludogorets 1945 (A, 7.45pm UCL)**
29	**Stoke City** (H)

DECEMBER

2	**Leicester City** (A, 8pm)
6	**Sunderland** (H)
9	**FC Basel 1893 (H, UCL)**
13	**Manchester United** (A)
17	**Capital One Cup** fifth round
20	**Arsenal** (H)
26	**Burnley** (A)
28	**Swansea City** (H)

JANUARY

1	**Leicester City** (H)
3	**FA Cup** third round
10	**Sunderland** (A)
17	**Aston Villa** (A)
21	**Capital One Cup** semi-final first leg
24	**FA Cup** fourth round
28	**Capital One Cup** semi-final second leg
31	**West Ham United** (H)

FEBRUARY

7	**Everton** (A)
10	**Tottenham Hotspur** (H)
14	**FA Cup fifth round**
17/18	**Champions League** round of 16 (1)
21	**Southampton** (A)
24/25	**Champions League** round of 16 (2)
28	**Manchester City** (H)

MARCH

1	**Capital One Cup** final
3	**Burnley** (H)
7	**FA Cup** quarter-finals
14	**Swansea City** (A)
21	**Manchester United** (H)

APRIL

4	**Arsenal** (A)
11	**Newcastle United** (H)
4/15	**Champions League** quarter-finals (1)
18	**Hull City** (A) / **FA Cup** semi-finals
21/22	**Champions League** quarter-finals (2)
25	**West Bromwich Albion** (A)

MAY

2	**Queens Park Rangers** (H)
5/6	**Champions Lge** semi-finals (1)
9	**Chelsea** (A)
12/13	**Champions Lge** semi-finals (2)
16	**Crystal Palace** (H)
24	**Stoke City** (A)
30	**FA Cup** final

JUNE

6	**Champions Leage** final

* LFC won on penalties

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WARRIOR

Reds fan and MND campaigner Mark Maddox talks through the last six months with Aiden Cusick

It's been an action-packed summer for Mark Maddox, whom we last caught up with in March. Since then, the lifelong Reds fan and former Altrincham player has competed in the London Marathon, been invited to Melwood for an afternoon with the manager and first-team squad and was named the Liverpool Echo's community sports personality of the year – all while continuing his battle with Motor Neurone Disease (MND).

"My profession ended a while ago, I've got to keep busy somehow," says Mark, 41. But 'busy' is a bit of an understatement where he's concerned, particularly when raising a fork to his mouth is the equivalent of trying to lift a 10kg weight.

That is one of MND's many unusual sensations, another of which is the driving force behind the Ice-Bucket Challenge that took over the internet at the instigation of fellow sufferer Peter Frates from America (where the condition is known as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosisor or ALS).

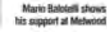
Participants are encouraged to film themselves pouring an icy bucket of water on their heads, upload it to a social-media account and nominate their peers to do the same, all in the cause of charity. "The idea is that the moment the ice hits you, you freeze, and that is the whole drill 24 hours a day living with MND," Mark explains. "The Americans were the first to do it and it's just snowballed since then."

A number of LFC players, including Steven Gerrard, Daniel Sturridge and Philippe Coutinho, braved the bucket in August, while Brendan Rodgers dedicated his own attempt to Mark, leaving the man himself feeling "absolutely made-up. I was surprised when he mentioned my name but I shouldn't have been. He's a genuine person who connects with not just fans but people in general and he took his challenge like a man. No squeals or screams – just shock!"

The Reds boss read Mark's story in the Liverpool FC matchday programme for last season's Premier League fixture with Tottenham on 30 March. And after being collared inside the stadium by Mark's best pal Ian Porter for an autograph, Rodgers told him about the impact it'd had on everyone ahead of the game.

Ian recalls: "I opened the programme and said, 'Brendan, can you sign this for Mark?' He goes: 'Tell Mark that he inspired me today. I spoke to the lads about him. I want to get him in at the training-ground'."

The manager was true to his word. Mark explains: "I got a text from Mike Marsh, who I used to play with, after the Spurs game saying the gaffer wants you to come in. It was unbelievable, honest to God."



Mario Balotelli shows his support at Melwood



A few weeks later, Mark, his mate Ian and their families were meeting the boss in person. "Sometimes when people meet me they can be a bit funny," says Mark. "Not in a bad way, but in a way where they don't really know what to say because they know my situation. But Brendan wasn't like that – he just embraced it.

"I normally make people feel at ease straightaway by making a joke. But I didn't have to with him, he was that down to earth."

In fact, much of the laughter that day came courtesy of the players – and at the expense of one in particular. Mark speaks of the buzz around the club at the time of his visit, approaching the final weeks of last season, describing the atmosphere as "serious but light-hearted." After an intense morning of training the players wound down with a game of crossbar challenge – with a twist. "They were taking turns trying to hit the bar and whoever was last had to stand on the goal-line," Ian explains. "Suarez whacks one and hits Coutinho's backside! All of a sudden Brendan appears, turns round and goes: 'That's for you, Mark!' He was overlooking them, howling with laughter."

For full-back Jon Flanagan, watching Mark mix with his heroes at Melwood was something of a role-reversal. Thirteen years ago, while playing semi-professionally for Altrincham, Mark returned one day to his amateur roots to check on a few former team-mates at local side Canada FC. One of them, Jon Flanagan senior, was playing that day and brought along his son. "Young Jonathon was only about seven or eight. His dad told him I'd signed for 'Alty' and to get my

autograph! It was a bit tongue-in-cheek on Flanno senior's part, but he was the first person who ever asked for it!"

But mingling with the stars at Melwood was only the start for Mark. Shortly after, he received a letter inviting him along to the *Liverpool Echo* end-of-season awards, where he was named Community Sports Personality of the Year.

"I was surprised, I didn't think I'd done that much to earn it, but when I saw the montage I was like: yeah, I have done all that! Alan Kennedy presented me with it. Ronnie Moran was there too and Rushie. I was honoured to be among Liverpool's sporting elite – so many of them have supported me in my quest to raise awareness for MND. That's why, in my eyes, this is the best city in the world."

Mark with Shanks and in the programme (below)

There's always more to come where Mark is concerned, and most recently he's competed in a half-marathon in Warrington. He managed an impressive 16 miles in London before having to withdraw – he'd felt unwell prior to the race and suffered in the intense heat that day. "The night before in our hotel I knew it was going to be tough. I had an infection in my peg-tube and without antibiotics I knew I'd have poison running through my body while I attempted the 26.2 miles.

"I stopped [at 16 miles] because I knew if I'd have gone on it would have made things worse. I later found out that someone had died after crossing the finish line. I realised then that I'd done the right thing."



But 16 miles turned out to be quite a poignant landmark. After a few calculations Mark realised that, since being diagnosed, he'd amassed a total of 87 miles across various running events – meaning that one more half-marathon would see him break the 100-mile mark. Hence the event in Warrington.

You could perhaps be forgiven for forgetting this man has a terminal muscle-wasting disease. "When I ran the Liverpool Marathon two-and-a-half years ago, I set out to just do one marathon, but my goal became to get the 100 miles.

"No-one has ever done it before, completed 100 miles with MND. It's a big thing for me personally – to leave something behind."

Mark blogs at **www.markmaddox.co.uk** and you can follow him on Twitter **@lastofadying1**.

MARK: THE LAST 4 YEARS

Dec 2010 diagnosed with MND
April 2012 skydives to raise awareness for MND
May 2012 releases the album Shoot the Moon with his band Last of a Dying Breed
June 2012 runs the Liverpool 10k
Oct 2012 runs the Liverpool Marathon
Nov 2012 achieves boxing coaching level 1 licence
April 2013 runs the London Marathon
May 2013 wins the Non-League Paper's Lifetime Achievement Award
Sept 2013 helps launch Football v MND campaign and sets up blog to raise further awareness
Dec 2014 releases second album Childhood Memories with Last of a Dying Breed
Feb 2014 wins Brave Heart at the Liverpool Community Superstars Award
April 2014 runs the London Marathon
April 2014 LFC manager and first team sign the MND Charter
May 2014 wins Liverpool Echo Community Sports Personality of the Year
June 2014 runs the Liverpool 10k
Sept 2014 runs English Half-Marathon (Warrington)


Carlsberg

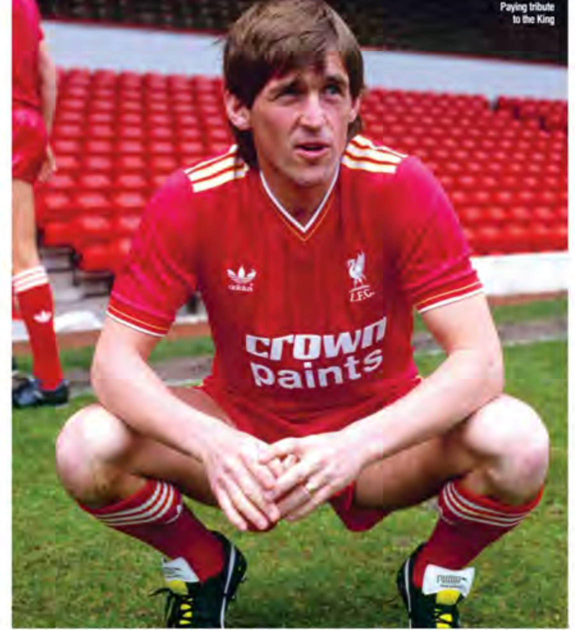
The write stuff

Award-winning Reds poet Ben is composing more verse about his beloved Liverpool FC

Reds fan and award-winning poet Ben Wilkinson is composing a brand new anthology of verse dedicated to Liverpool Football Club's greatest players.

Guardian book critic Ben, who was featured in the magazine at the start of the year, recently published a book of poems entitled *For Real*. Kitted out in the colours of LFC, the collection won the prestigious Poetry Business Competition, judged by University of Liverpool graduate and former Poet Laureate, Carol Ann Duffy. It was also awarded the 2014 Northern Promise Award by arts organisation New Writing North – providing a grant that has given Ben time to write the new series, called *Kopite Sonnets* and commemorating legends from Bill Shankly to Kenny Dalglish, through to John Barnes and Steven Gerrard.

Ben says: "Two poems, called simply *John Barnes* and *King Kenny*, are the first in the sequence. I also want to place these great players in the history of the political and social changes taking place in Liverpool



Paying tribute to the King

"I want to place these players in the history of the city and country at the time"



and the rest of the country at the time.

"In the piece about Barnes I'm aiming to not just capture his incredible ability and flair as a footballer but also the abuse and intolerance he suffered and – to his great credit – rose above. In the poem about Kenny I decided to focus on the Hillsborough tragedy as a way of highlighting how Dalglish supported the families. I remember when I first heard that he'd attended all 96 funerals – at one point, four in one day – which struck me as an amazing example of what the man, the club and the city stood for. Nothing could capture better the spirit of *You'll Never Walk Alone*."

You can follow news about Ben and his new collection on Twitter @BenWilko85.

King Kenny

Day breaks to heavy clouds over Anfield Road,
the Sabbath beyond that echoing afternoon.
Gates opened, the faithful bring flowers,
wreaths, notes ... sisters, mothers, fathers
weeping, placing them in the goalmouth,
the eighteen-yard box, past the halfway line.
You'd think for all the world it'd snowed.
Then one man, making no fuss, steps up,
sits down two teddy bears, gifted by his kids –
a man who's performed miracles on this field,
resurrected hopes. Who'll pay his respects
to every one, not in duty's name, but love's.
"They supported Liverpool Football Club.
It's the turn of the Club to support them."



Working with children and adults to help inspire positive change through sport – follow us on Twitter **@LFCFoundation** to keep up to date with the community team's projects and activities

Martha, Ryan and Jon with Respect 4 All's local stars

Foundation family

Special guests galore for Liverpool FC Foundation programmes

First-team stars, both male and female, plus a FIFA representative have been enjoying and engaging with Liverpool FC Foundation programmes in recent weeks.

Reds new boy Lazar Markovic and Ladies midfielder Amanda Da Costa attended one of the Foundation's community football sessions in Wavertree. The pair took part in a warm-up and skills techniques drill with youngsters at their weekly coaching session at Wavertree Aquatics Centre. Foundation coaches provide six sessions each week across three hubs in Wavertree, Rainhill and Anfield.

Meanwhile Reds stars Jon Flanagan, Martha Harris and Ryan McLaughlin paid a visit to the Foundation's

"To see everyone at the camp having fun was really rewarding for me"

Respect 4 All summer camp at North Liverpool Academy to congratulate its local stars, all of whom were presented with certificates and LFC goodies by Jon, Martha and Ryan. Respect 4 All delivers free impairment-specific multi-sport classes to more than 200 children and adults in Liverpool and Wirral every week. Jon said: "To see all the participants having fun and enjoying their sports was really rewarding for me."

And Ladies star Becky Easton was joined by FIFA executive committee member Moya Dodd at a Foundation female football showcase session at Anfield Sports & Community Centre, attended by 30 young players from across Merseyside.

Funded by the Premier League and Liverpool FC Foundation, the FA Girls Programme aims to increase access to high-quality football coaching for females and increase overall engagement in the game. Mark Haig, Head of Operations at the Foundation, said: "It was great to introduce Moya to our young participants. We are really proud of the provision we provide to females across Merseyside."

If you are interested in registering for future Liverpool FC Foundation activities or would like further information please contact **lfcfoundation@liverpoolfc.com.**



Becky Easton and Moya Dodd at the female football event


Lazar and Amanda coaching in Wavertree...


...and with the youngsters and their certificates



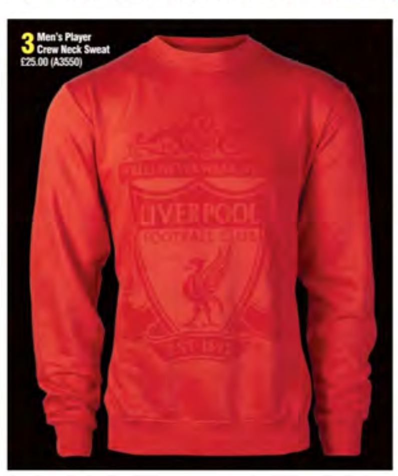
Becky and Moya with young players at Anfield Sports & Community Centre


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2 Men's Red Watson Polo
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WISHLIST

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4 Men's Cheer Tee Shirt
£25.00 (A3501)



5 Ladies Laila Glitter Print Tee Shirt
£22.00 (A3831)



6 Men's Slide Polo Shirt
£35.00 (A3542)



7 Men's Byline Hoody
£40.00 (A3504)



8 Kids 1892 Flock Tee Shirt
£15.00 (A3649)

All featured products are available to pre-order now and available in all LFC official stores

#theKOP

Have you visited #theKOP yet?

LFC's brand new official social media hub is now live.

#theKOP is your one-stop shop for all LFC-related social media needs and gives you the chance to share your thoughts on the official website.

So, whether it's Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram or Pinterest, you'll find all the latest talking points on #theKOP.

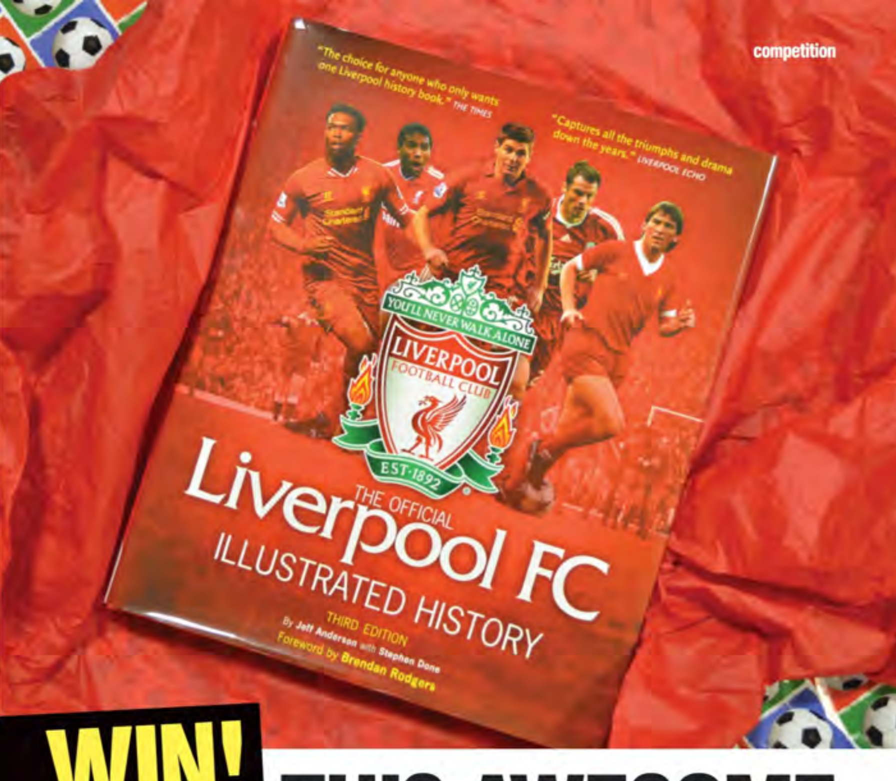





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WIN! THIS AWESOME LFC BOOK

It's the ultimate present for any ardent Red – and we've got 5 COPIES to give away!

Just published by Carlton Books, *The Official Liverpool FC Illustrated History* charts the club's complete story – from the fascinating formative years through to the Bill Shankly reign, the total dominance of the 1970s and 80s, the Premier League era and the glory of Istanbul, and the brave, new and exciting world under manager Brendan Rodgers.

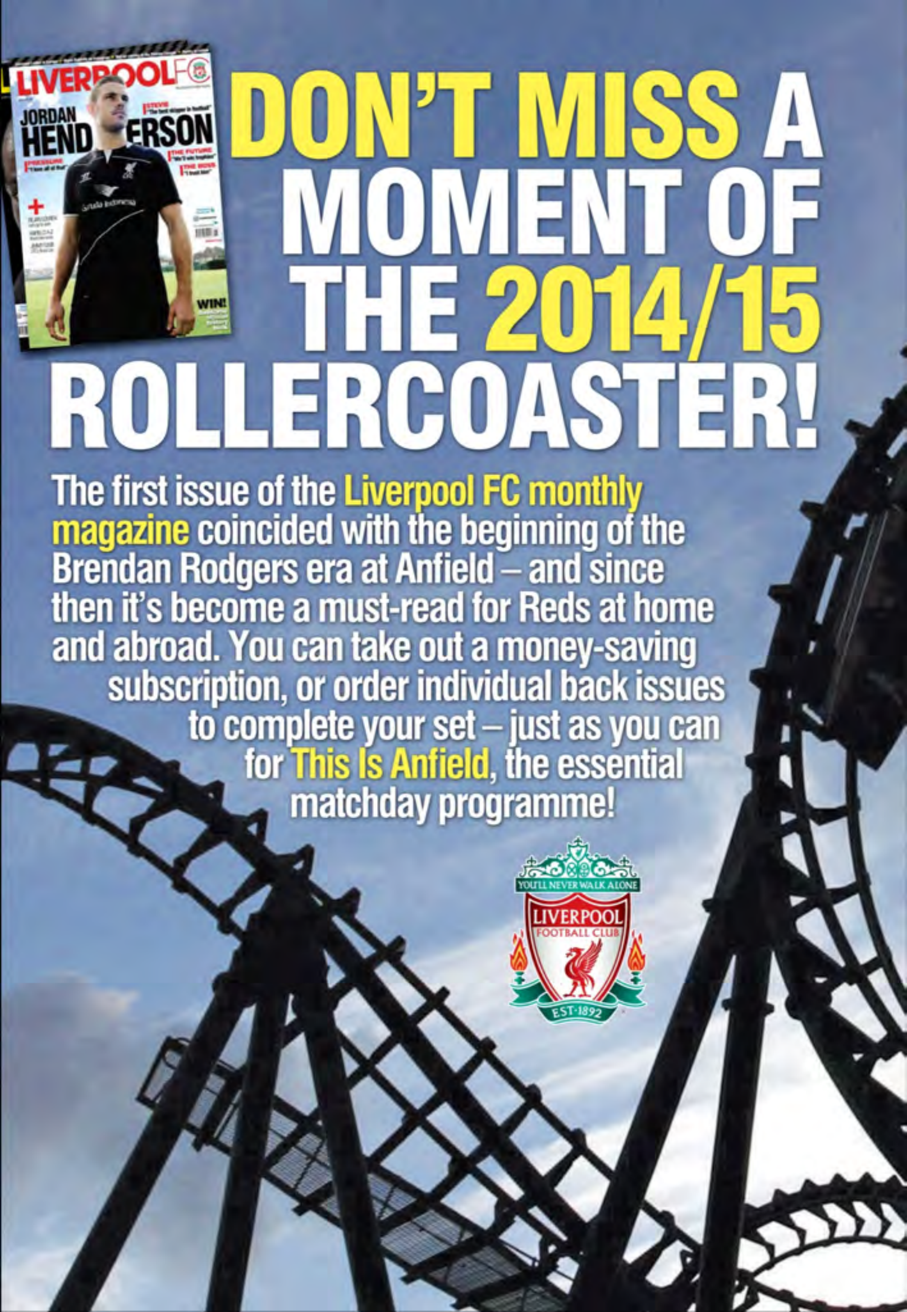
Fully illustrated throughout and packed with star players, super stats and wonderful memories from the history of this unique football club, it's the perfect book for any true LFC supporter.

Featuring a foreword by Brendan himself, and co-written by Jeff Anderson and Stephen Done, curator of the Anfield Museum, it's available now for £25 from all good bookstores and **www.carltonbooks.co.uk.**

For a chance to win a copy simply answer the following question:

WHEN BRENDAN RODGERS TOOK CHARGE FOR HIS FIRST COMPETITIVE GAME AS LIVERPOOL BOSS WHO WERE THE OPPOSITION?

The closing date is Friday 14 November 2014. Email your answer – including your name and address – to LFCmag@programmemaster.com. Please put HISTORY BOOK COMPO in the subject bar. We'll announce the winners in a forthcoming issue.


LIVERPOOL FC
JORDAN HENDERSON
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19 September
This is what happened to me when I hear it the first time in Anfield.

16 September
@stevengerrard ! Yes ! Good start guys! Thanks supporters! YOU WERE AMAZING!



5 September
Liverpool beach! Ahah nice anyway :-)

4 September
Good morning everybody! Good morning Liverpoooooooool!!!!



31 August
Congratulations to the capitan for his record of scoring in 16 consecutive years. #YNWA



30 August
Yesterday training:-) head-tennis! Lol



29 August
LFC!



29 August
LIVERPOOL Centre



28 August
Looking forward to play in the Liverpool's fans warm support of Anfield!



27 August
We were five!



25 August
@jonflan38 #lallana going to stadium!



25 August
YNWA! Come on Liverpool!

David PRICE

Our new vice-captain can be an integral member of the LFC team for years to come



Jordan on England duty

The appointment of Jordan Henderson as Liverpool's vice-captain shows what you can achieve in sport if you put your mind to it. He had a tough start to his career at the club but let's not forget he had barely turned 21 when he joined and he has proven to be a quick learner.

Kenny Dalglish clearly saw something in Jordan to bring him to LFC for a reasonably big fee, and the fact he played him week in, week out showed that he had belief in him.

Given that he was so young when he arrived, he was always someone I thought would need time before we saw the best of him. It speaks volumes for the steps he's made that he is now one of the most important players in the team. Evidence of that came in those three games he missed through suspension at the end of last season, particularly the crucial Chelsea and Crystal Palace fixtures.

"He has shown a toughness to succeed here at this club"

Being named vice-captain is a well-deserved honour for him and also recognition of his potential. Time will tell but you really could see him being a future captain of both Liverpool and England. He could be a Steven Gerrard-type figure in terms of the influence he has on the team.

When you look at Jordan now you can see that he definitely has leadership characteristics. The players respect him and look to him on the pitch. He is still young but he's pretty experienced and can go out there and take the game by the scruff of the neck. Taking that responsibility is a big part of being a leader.

On the pitch he's got a lot going for him. His energy and work-rate are second-to-none, but his footballing brain has improved in the last couple of seasons too and I think working closely with Brendan Rodgers has had a lot to do with that.

Off the pitch he is impressive too. People talk a lot about mental strength and as a professional sportsman you have to be able to deal with setbacks along the way. It was only a couple of years ago there was talk about him going to Fulham around the time we were linked with Clint Dempsey. Fortunately for Liverpool he stayed and fought hard. In doing that he's shown mental toughness and a determination to succeed at this club because he believes he belongs here.

There were plenty of times in his early days here when he could have just rolled over and accepted that he might not be good enough for us, but he didn't. He believes in himself as a footballer and rightly so because he really is that good a player.

His rise to being an important player for club and country is testament to the work he's put in and I believe he will be part of the backbone of Liverpool Football Club for many years to come.

On a personal note, I have been making good progress after my hand injury and am hopeful of being able to fight again in December. We are putting the final details together but there should be an announcement about an opponent and venue soon.

Follow David on Twitter @DavidPrice_1


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